

ELIZABETH DE BRUCE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF CLAN-ALBIN.

O! GOOD, YOUR WORSHIP, TELL IT OF ALL THINGS;—FOR I MIGHTILY
DELIGHT IN HEARING OF LOVE STORIES.

SANCHO PANZA.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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ELIZABETH DE BRUCE.

CHAPTER I.

THE WINDY WEDNESDAY.

That night, a child might understand,
The de'il had business on his hand.

BURNS.

OLD persons in the midland counties of Scotland, will often, by the winter's fireside, on a stormy night, astonish the youngers by their talk of a day which they call "*The Windy Wodensday*." The exact date of this memorable day ; not easily fixed—nor is it of much importance. It happened, however, when the year was in the wane—when the gorgeous skies of autumn blacken into winter—when spitting and *snell* winds begin to whistle through leafless forests, and rave

through chimney canns—when the citizens of the Old Town of Edinburgh hail once more shop windows sparkling o' nights, and welcome those cressets hung in the third heavens, which may be seen glancing cheerily from the high lattices that cluster round the imperial steeple of old St. Giles.—It was immediately after All Hallowday, the season when the douce burghers of Edinburgh, having cleared scores with Heaven for the approaching winter, the godless generation of writers, from the Tweed to the Spey, were free to flock back once more to their towering homes in the Old, and then almost the only town.

The wind held high mastery through the long evening; but towards midnight violent and scudding showers struggled with the hurricane; and, in an hour afterwards, the spirit of the blast was effectually cowed by heavy, rushing, downright rain.

Among sundry other acts of grace, the amended weather permitted two decent and responsible burghers of Edinburgh to quit, in rather comfortable trim, the snug harbourage of a well-frequented tavern of those days, situated near the City Cross, where, “high and dry,” amid the coil of the elements, they had been celebrating an annual

festival of the ancient and worshipful Incorporation of BAXTERS.

It was now midnight, which the long-tongued bell of St. Giles loudly proclaimed, careless of the effect produced upon the startled ear of Deacon Daigh, the elder and graver citizen. The younger man was still of the humour to boast of “chirping over his cups,” and of “hearing the chimes at midnight.” He was, moreover, still a bachelor.

“Ten—eleven—twelve”—counted the worthy Deacon, halting and gravely turning up his ear. “Weel,—be thankit, there’s nae mair o’ ye! Mrs. Daigh, our wife, now, will threep it’s three o’ the blessed morning,—and this the week after the Town’s Sacrament.—Not that I’m an advocate for late hours, Mr. Burlin; but as the younger brethren saw it meet in the exercise o’ a sound discretion to vote me into the chair, passing over many of the craft, forbye yoursel’, Mr. Burlin, far mair worthy o’ sic distinction, and far better qualified for discharging the duties of office, it behooved me to sit out the ploy jocosely, that decency might mingle with our mirth,—as weel as to gie countenance to you younger lads, or I would never have stirred abroad on sic a judgment-like night,—a night, in which the windows o’ Heaven are

opened,”—[here the worthy Deacon lapsed into a fit of tipsy solemnity]—“the fountains o’ the great deeps unscaled, and the Cowgate strand rumbling like the Canon-Mills water in a Lammassie speat. This night-hawking is no my ordinary, Benjie;—I may use that familiarity wi’ an auld ’prentice. It is kenned weel that David Daigh, or Deacon Daigh, as friends and weel-wishers are pleased to style me, has not for thirty years been three times out o’ his bed after the Town-guard drum beat in at ten o’clock, except at an orra time like this same night, or when taking a chack o’ supper, or a chappin o’ ale and a pie in a customer’s house, wi’ a friend like yoursel’. No, Benjie,—frac the West Bow fit to the Watergate Port, I’m known for a man of a sober and steady walk, and—”

But here the united craftsmen, who for sundry reasons felt that “two are better than one,” and were, accordingly, stuck fast, arm in arm, like two adhering three-pennies, came thundering down upon the resounding causeway. Let it not, however, be imagined, that this sudden loss of equilibrium proceeded from any internal cause. The younger man, indeed, maintained the perpendicular with judge-like decorum, and even op-

posed an adequate resistance to the less steady movements of his ancient master. But, besides the violence of the weather, and being embarrassed by the huge snuff-mull and other insignia and bearings of the craft, now returning to their annual slumber in the Deacon's parlour-bunker press, on entering that narrow dark defile, which in those days lay between the Luckenbooths and the low sheds, called *Krames*, which then stuck like barnacles to a seventy-four round the stately pile of St. Giles, some persons rapidly advancing in the dark, with a hasty, and probably inadvertent push, produced the above mentioned catastrophe.

“What mean ye by this, sirs?” cried Master Burlin, angrily challenging the aggressors as he scrambled to his feet.—“Ken ye, my masters, wha ye are pushing and jundying that unchancy gate? Are ye hurt, Deacon?”

“Lord sake, Benjie, haud the lang tongue o’ ye!” earnestly whispered the still recumbent, but peace-pursuing Deacon. “I wad na for a Yule batch, or the langest score on my nick-sticks, (and that’s the auld Leddy de Bruce’s,) ha’e my name handied, or my word heard, in a causey bruilzie at this hour o’ the night. Pass on, worthy gentle-

men. 'There is nae ill done but might^aha'e been waur."

The strangers seemed disposed to make some apology ; but the barm of Master Burlin's blood raged the higher for the soft answer of his companion.

"Speak for yoursel', Deacon Daigh," cried he ; "but I'll learn thae penny-page gentry how they come thud against 'sponsible men. Ken ye, my masters, wha ye speak to?"

Now, in the whole circle of categories, there is not perhaps one more injudicious, or more calculated to draw forth a saucy response than the above.

"How should we know?" cried the former speaker, drawing himself up and crossing his arms on his breast. "Some drunken mechanical rogue, who should have been snoring on his chaff-bed some five hours ago."

"D'ye hear till him?" cried Master Burlin, champing his teeth in rage. "At the Cross o' Edinburgh ! to a burgess and freeman ! Ha'e ye the spirit of an oven cricket in ye, Deacon Daigh ? —Guard ! Town-guard !" shouted the bold baxter and he actually attempted to collar his adversary

"Lord sake, Benjie Burlin, let go the gentle-

man," cried the Deacon, who had now regained his legs, and stood wringing his hands in extremity.

The stranger very adroitly shook off the valiant Burlin; and, tripping up his heels, again fairly laid him sprawling on his back; while louder than before the baxter shouted—"Guard! 'Town-guard!" and the stranger, darting through the narrow pass, followed the tall figure, which, noiseless as a ghost, had glided past at the very commencement of the fray.

"For the sake of peace keep a calm sough, Benjie," whispered the Deacon, bending over his prostrate friend, and anxiously groping about to recover the cognizance of the craft. "Will ye cry up thae yellochin hieland deevils to mend the calamity? Up stiffy—there's a braw chield."

Still the malcontent Burlin shouted—"Guard!"

"Lord's sake, Benjie,"—and the Deacon clapped his hand before the other's mouth,—“what are ye about? I'll be ruined at a' hands. Kirk and Council! Shop and neighbourhood!—Nay, then, I'll just put in leg bail, and let the craft's jewels tak' their chance wi' ye. Better they be lost than the jewel o' my gude name,”—and off the Deacon hobbled.

He had not advanced many paces when his

steps were arrested by the abrupt return of the muffled figure that had first shot bye. This person must now have made a circuit through the Parliament Close, for the place of encounter was exactly at the door of the old jail.

“Don’t be alarmed, sir,” said he, and he civilly apologized for the former accidental jostle. “There is not a soul astir around your Cross on this wild night,—not a caudie to be found, and my business is urgent. Can you, sir, direct me to the house of the well-known midwife, Mistress—Mistress”—and he hesitated, as if memory failed.

“Wha but Luckie Metcalf, I’ll warrant,” said the Deacon, now quite at home.

“Right—I strangely forgot,” said the stranger.

“Wha should it be but just Luckie Metcalf, my next door neighbour!—the first turnpike stair in our wynd—the *Clam-shell land*, signifying the Palmer’s land, as Mr. Gideon Haliburton, a sticket Seceder minister, tells me frae the Pilgrims’ palmerin to the Holy Land lang syne. But what am I palmerin here about, and your job standin’. Come on, sir, we’ll get a lighted bowet at the Guard-house. And here’s Mr. Burlin will lend a hand. Ye maun forget and forgi’e, Benjie. It’s a *crying* case the gentlemen are out on.”

The tardy appearance of the mercenaries, and probably something in the tall and athletic figure of the stranger, enforced this argument with the malcontent Burlin. The proffered civility of the "bowet," or lantern, was declined; and they proceeded in darkness in the direction of the Deacon's dwelling, the muffled stranger stalking on in silence, like a troubled spirit abroad on dark and midnight errands, Master Burlin sullen, and the honest Deacon panting in haste, and yet making the whole cost of conversation.

"Ye'll be a stranger, I'm wotting," said he. A slight nod was doubtful response, but might be construed into an affirmative. The Deacon, a very good-natured man in his way, was not disposed to be urgent. Indeed after the trades' great annual supper he was generally as much in the humour of hearing his own tongue wag, as of listening to the discourses of any other man; and the high and haughty-looking stranger offered no bar to this harmless gratification. After a glance at the gudewife's several "lying-in jobs," the Deacon, like a friendly man as he was, proceeded to eulogize the skill of his neighbour.

"She's a canny kimmer, Luckie Metcalf," said he, "and has seen mony a rig in her day. I ha'e

heard her oure a dish o' tea, or it may be something stronger—for a wife in her line o' business wad need support bye your ordinary tea slops—mak' her brag o' reckoning the best in Scotland amang her bairns. There's the Lord Parkha's leddy, and all the de Bruce family, and Mr. —, the great advocate. I mind as it were yesterday o' selling him a bap, as he gaed by the door ilka day to the hie-school;—sirs, how things do come about! He is for certain ane o' Luckie's clecking. I was as near her lug as I am to you, sir, when he made the grand speech again' her that lost her the tierce plea wi' her step-bairns. 'The de'il sned the souple tongue o' ye,' quoth she, half laughing, as his gown ga'e us a wap when he gaed bye us into the robing room, sucking a sweet oranger,— 'gif my shears had been in my hussey-case yon morning, ye wad na hae played me this slippery trick;—for its bruited, sir, though I ay thought it but a silly clatter, that the great Mr. ——— was like tongue-tacked for the first half hour o' his life; but that has been weel made up to him in a wonderful speat o' speech ever since syne, the words bolt—bolting out, before the FIFTEEN on the bench, like sheeled pease frae a mill happer.—But here, in gude time, is our wyn^d."

With prompt civility the Deacon mounted the stairs, and sounded the customary alarum on the door of Mrs. Metcalf, by running a loose iron ring briskly over the serrated surface of an oddly fashioned piece of iron garniture, a screaming, creaking apparatus, intended to supply the place of a modern knocker or door-bell.

“ I shall trouble you no farther, sir,” said the stranger, in a tone which spoke ‘ good night,’ almost as plainly as the cold and dignified ‘ good night’ that followed.

“ Ye have got your travail for your pains, Deacon, with that proud patch,” said the still sulky Burlin.

“ Ye may say sae Benjie,” replied the Deacon. “ But, what can he be man? Wrapped up in his *breachan*, a velvet mask on his face, and pistols and dagger in his belt. Saw ye the glint o’ them, lad, as he wapped by? That high English tongue has like too a twang of the hieland speech. I wish gude may be meant.—But, Lord sake! now, Benjie, dinna let my word be heard.”

The prudent Deacon, with his friend, now retreated to the entrance of the steep lane, or wynd, and knocked up his lass, resolving in his private mind to lay this untimely alarm at his decent door

to the account of the midwife's customers, as from experience he had reason to dread the long sharp cars of his neighbour, Miss Jacobina Pingle, a nervous maiden gentlewoman, who, in the tenth story or *top flat*, exercised the calling of silk glove-mender and stocking-ingrafter, and, as he alleged, neither slept night nor day ; so that, though she seldom stirred abroad, she was supposed to know more of the secret history of the *land* than any of the regular daily fixtures at the head of the wynd.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONFLAGRATION.

Dark sits the evening upon the Thane's Castle,
The black clouds gather round ;
Soon shall they be red as the blood of the valiant !
The destroyer of forests shall shake his red crest against them,
He, the bright consumer of palaces ;
Broad waves he his blazing banner,
Red, wide, and dusky.—

Ivanho

THE worthy Deacon had scarcely for two hours occupied the narrow sleeping place allotted him by Mrs. Daigh—for on this night of flagrant transgression he prudently declined the contest, which he sometimes manfully maintained, for ample verge,—when the family were aroused by the rumbling rub-a-dub roll of the “ fire-drum.”—The pealing bells of gray St. Giles, the clatter of a thousand feet, the hurtle and thundering of the fire engines along the pavements, eager interrogatories, abrupt answers, hoarse yells, shouts

of “ Fire ! fire ! ” and all those signs of consternation and alarm, mixed with the strange excitement and nameless wanton delight, which a midnight conflagration spreads through a populous city, might perhaps have failed to draw our carousing burgher from his pillow, had not the clamorous terrors of Mrs. Daigh, about certain wooden tenements in St. Mary’s Wynd, compelled him to activity.

“ Our new conquest to be burnt,” said the dame, “ and me no infest three days. But, it’s a just judgment on you, David Daigh, for your doings this night.—Miss Jacobina, frae her window, is crying, she’s sure St. Mary’s Wynd’s on fire.—‘ Heeh, sirs,’ I heard her saying wi’ a laugh, ‘ and is the braw subject o’ our gude neighbours to gae aff wi’ a lunt that gate.’—Spitefu ettercap ! ”

The idle crowd which had already assembled in the street, completely choked up the direct approach to the scene of the fire, and compelled the Deacon to make a long circuit before he could distinctly learn on what spot its ravages were going forward. This he discovered to be in that hollow which lies between the Calton Hill and the north side of the ridge on which the Canongate extends, and very near the grounds of Holyrood-house.

“ It’s Cambuskenneth Lodge, Deacon,” said Miss Jacobina, or, as she was familiarly called, Miss Jacky Pingle, who, slip-shod and wrapped in her red cardinal, stood the oracle of one of those broken groups which filled the streets. “ It’s an auld prophecy, that it maun be thrice burnt, to purify it o’ the red guilt of blood, the blood of the de Bruce—naething can gainsay that.”

“ I have heard o’ sic idle clavers,” replied the Deacon, who had now surmounted his personal concern, and was indifferent to all else.

“ Idle clavers !” retorted Miss Jacobina, the very pearlin’ edging of her night-cap vibrating with indignation ; for, like Horace Walpole’s fair and provident friend, she kept a decent night-cap to throw on in cases of fire—“ Idle clavers ! I have heard my grand-aunt, Provost Falconer’s dochter, Deacon,”—Miss Jacky looked round with dignity,—“ tell an hundred times how at the last burning in the year 1679; the ghost of the Lady de Bruce who got foul play in that dark house, was seen towering over the flames, clasping her bluidy winaing sheet as she screamed aloud.

‘ Ance burnt ! Twice burnt !—When I come again, I’ll fear ye a’ ?’

And look ! see ye that neighbours. • Is not she come again ?”

The black voluminous smoke, which had for some time rolled its enormous coils from the huge vomitory, now burst into jets and eddies of flame, in which, at this instant, the eye of fancy or superstition might have fashioned the outline of a soaring female form, arrayed in the redundant drape of the time, or in the weeds of the sepulchre.

While the group feasted their eyes on this imaginary and quickly shifting resemblance, the Deacon felt his arm suddenly seized with the convulsive grasp of a trembling hand, and, looking round, saw his gossip, Mrs. Metcalf, with pale visage, mouth distended, eyes starting from their sockets, and every mark of horror and supernatural dread.

“ Help, neighbour Daigh,” she panted forth ; “ help, for the love of Heaven—I am a gone woman.”

“ The de’il’s come owre the women folk the night, wi’ their ghaists and their glamour. Ha’e ye seen the Leddy de Bruce’s ghaist too ?”

“ Many a word lightly spoken has a heavy fall. I have seen this night what flesh and blood will not soon ourcast,” replied the midwife.

“Cambuskenneth Lodge burning, I’se warrant. My moan is soon made for the auld black ruckle. But the de Bruce’s were great patrōns o’ yours, no doubt.”

“Cambuskenneth Lodge!” hoarsely screamed the woman, clasping her hands.—“Said ye that man? ’Then is my dream out! and the Lord take to his mercy the innocent blood shed this night, and in His ain time judge the foul unnatural slayers.”

“Ou, the wife’s noddle is working like a new-set sponge!” cried the Deacon, as the woman hung on his arm in a state approaching to insensibility. “Miss Jacky, ha’e ye ony skill o’ this gear? If I could get ane o’ thae hieland loons, wi’ their sedan cheyres now, to yerk her hame, a sup o’ a brandy posset would reveeve her, and set us a’ to rights.”

The maiden, her long ears in her neck, her skinny lips compressed with very eagerness, seeing or divining much more in the excessive agitation of the midwife than was visible to the honest Deacon, hastily advanced with offers of aid and consolation. It appeared that her presence acted as an immediate restorative or bracer; for Mrs. Metcalf rallied, said “her dwalm had gone off,”

and proposed returning home with the assistance of the Deacon's arm.

"Aye, and welcome, Luckie; and troth I think them on whose job ye gaed afoot, might have seen ye hame at sic hours. And now I mind me—did not I send ye a gay queer customer this same morning?"

"Ye sent?" cried Miss Pingle.

"Some outlandish chap, I take it," continued the Deacon. "Made ye a gude job of it, Luckie?" Mrs. Metcalf groaned.—"Now, Lord sake, woman, forget that Cambuskenneth Lodge and Liddy de Bruce's ghaist! 'Od, I'se lay her in a Red sea o' plotty this blessed night; and, leddies, ye shall baith help me."

Neither the consolations of the baker, nor the promise of his good cheer, could restore the spirits of the woman, whom he now dragged rather than led along.—Near that part of the Old City wall, where the Kirk of Field is said to have stood, the trio paused to look back on the still blazing fire. The heavens in that point were kindled to an intense fiery glow; but the first stage of the combustion was over, and no fresh fuel being supplied, the radiance gradually paled, and finally blended with the blackness of the still

early hour. A city so picturesque in situation and architecture, touched with brilliant but fitful illumination in every prominent point, from the dusky brow of its overhanging castle, to the spires and turrets of its dismantled palace, might have awakened a transient sense of the beautiful, even in those who had most reason to dread the progress of the destructive element. But our douce Deacon cared little for such matters: so, having seen his fair companions safely bestowed in their homes, he said “He would just streek himsel’ for an hour by the side o’ Mrs. Daigh; as there were fain fules enow to carry water buckets without him, and the fire lay far frae St. Mary’s Wynd.”

At the hour of twelve next day, the usual complement of breakfast rolls allotted to the midwife, remained on the Deacon’s shelves uncalled for. The discussions at the head of the wynd this morning all hinged on last night’s fire.—Cambuskenneth Lodge was one of those ancient hotels, which, when the Court of Scotland was held at Holyrood, had accommodated a family of high distinction, one of the very few illustrious Scottish houses which had long retained the Roman faith. But the mansion had been untenanted for many years. Its casements were dismantled—its paved court

was chequered with nettles, docks, and grass, and the roofs of the offices which ranged round three sides of its high surrounding walls, were mostly fallen in, so that the wonder grew how fire could have reached a place so lonely and so isolated. The Deacon, and the auditory whom his wisdom daily enlightened on all subjects of passing interest, not irrationally conjectured that some houseless vagrants had clambered over the walls of the court, and, either by accident, or to conceal their depredations, had set fire to the massive structure, which, according to tradition, had already been twice burned down.

Mrs. Metcalf, the Deacon's neighbour, could have told another story; at least so conjectured Miss Jacobina Pingle, who, on taking up a farthing *whig* for her afternoon tea, announced the alarming illness of that useful matron.

“The fever had flown to her brain,” Miss Jacky said; “and she had raved all day of a murdered leddy and a misguided wean, fire, flames, and naked swords. Mr. Gideon Haliburton, who lodged in her out-shot chalmers, had passed two stricken hours locked up with her. Pen, ink, and paper had been sent for; and it was thought she had made a full confession and

a clean breast.—Though it's no to be thought," added Miss Jacky, "that a sticket seceder minister, wha is but a dominie after a', can gi'e that comfort and clearance to the death-bed o' a sinner which could be drawn frae a godly placed minister o' the reformed Kirk of Scotland."

"We are a' sinners, Miss Jacky," replied the honest baker, with some sharpness; "but this is heavy news ye bring of my worthy auld neighbour." And suspecting that the curious maiden was bent on *precognoscing* himself, concerning the events of the preceding night, he dexterously slipped past her, and took his way to the scene of the late conflagration.

The frame-work of society is so chequered and interwoven—so held together by minute, and often invisible links and filaments, that even in a very large city the most dexterous address can hardly keep free of some one of its many meshes. This may daily be seen in the thousand little incidents which conspire to bring hidden culprits to light, and to reveal, in the brightness of noon-day, what has been transacted in the darkness of midnight. It was, however, but a transient light that the diligent and judicious inquiries of the cautious Deacon procured on this dark subject. A customer,

who lived as far off as the Abbey-hill, had, at midnight, on *The Windy Wodensday*, seen a close carriage, followed by two muffled outriders, and preceded by one, drive furiously up the north back of the Canongate, and stop at, or near the wicket gate of Cambuskenneth Lodge. A sedan chair had been seen to wait for a full hour near the North Loch, in which Mrs. Metcalf had probably been conveyed, as, when found in an out-house of the Lodge, it contained a letter addressed to that excellent matron, in these laconic terms :

“ The hour is twelve. Be punctual, and be faithful ; or dread the terrible vengeance of him you wot of.”

This menacing epistle the Deacon, for the reasonable price of a half-pint of brandy, obtained from the highland chairman who had found it ; but afterwards on the request of Mr. Gideon Haliburton, he gave it up to that unbeneficed divine, who had, it was known, acted as ghostly confessor to the midwife.

On the third day that good woman died, as if to spite Miss Jacky Pingle and the other gossips of the wynd ; and, though of unblemished reputation, and even popular in her own neighbourhood, shrewd suspicions came to be whispered of “ a

piece of money" given as a bribe to procure the removal of an infant, whose existence either stood in the way of some project of unlawful aggrandizement, or was a stain on the honour of some noble house.

Eight days afterwards, the Deacon's servant-lass, who had been permitted to visit her relations at the neighbouring village of Cramond, reported, that, on the second morning after *The Windy Wednesday*, an elderly woman, travel-worn and outlandish in her look, was discovered resting on the parapet of the bridge of Cramond, with a new-born infant "mother naked of a' christian cleeding, save a grand satin mantle, and some wrappers of fine napery."

But maugre this information, Miss Pingle was highly scandalized that the Deacon—"a man in office," as she said, "did not cause a search to be made for the banes o' the murdered bairn, whilk would in all likelihood be found below the mid-wife's hearth-stane."

The prudent Deacon pondered all these things. That there was a mystery, and probably a guilty one, he was satisfied. Whatever it might be, it had produced little good to his frank, jolly, motherly old neighbour—of whom he refused to believe any thing sinister, much less cruel or atro-

cious—and it boded no advantage to himself. He therefore resolved to observe silence as to his own share of the mysterious warning forth, and so earnestly implored Miss Pingle “no to let his word be heard, or his name be come owre in sic a kittle question;” that the shrewd maiden began to suspect his share in the affair to be much deeper than he was willing to avow. Notwithstanding the baker’s precautions, the affair was very generally talked of; and, among the memorabilia of *The Windy Wodensday*, the mysterious burning of Cambuskenneth Lodge, and the sudden death of “Luckie Metcalf the howdie,” bore an important part.

Shortly after this, the midwife’s only relative, a daughter advanced in life, married and left Edinburgh; and her father confessor, the Reverend Gideon Haliburton, was promoted to the charge of a straggling hill-side flock, on the south-western skirts of ——shire. Faithful to the mysterious confidence placed in him by the dying woman, he preserved entire silence on what had passed, regardless alike of the open assaults and secret minings of Miss Jacky Pingle, who indited him to sundry tea-drinkings, and of the sly interrogatories of the Chief of the Bakers.

“It was a dark providence,” he said; “and the Lord would bring light out of it in His ain

time. 'The less ye ken o' sic matters, man, the sounder will your sleep be. Keep well when you are well ; and follow your ain peaceful calling. I went not out of my own road to pry into this mystery. The will of Providence laid it at my door.—May it be His will soon to remove the charge ; for to me it is a sore and a heavy."

This whetter and damper—for these hints acted as both—silenced, if they did not satisfy the Deacon.

Our history though scarcely begun, must now make a leap of nearly nineteen years down the stream of time, during which period the Deacon had greatly prospered in all his worldly undertakings, added "stone biggings" to "wooden tenements," and given his name to immortality in "Daigh's Close," become an elder of the Greyfriars' Kirk, and Convener of the Trades, buried Mrs. Daigh, dined once, pending an election, at —— House, and finally saw, with somewhat unchristian exultation, Miss Jacobina Pingle struck with deafness of the left ear, brought on, it was alleged, by having kept that sharp and useful organ too long exposed to the draught of a key-hole, on the night when the doughty Mr. Burlin made successful overtures for the fair hand of the elder Miss Daigh.

CHAPTER III.

A FAMILY GROUP.

Come homely characters that no one hit.

Pope.

And have I not the privilege of sorrow,
Without a menial's staring eye upon me ?
Who sent thee thus to charter my free thoughts,
And tell me where to shrink, and where to pause ?
Officious slave away !

MILMAN.

It was nearly nineteen years from the memorable night of *The Windy Wednesday*, and early in a breezy bracing October morning, that Wolfe Grahame, a young Scottish gentleman of an ancient family in ——shire, prepared to leave the home of his childhood and youth, to join a regiment of horse, then stationed in the south-west of Ireland, in which he had lately been promoted to the rank of captain.

The servants had been astir at a very early hour on the morning of a day so important to the fam-

ily, as that on which the heir was to set out on a perilous expedition ; for Ireland was then in rebellion. A profuse breakfast, served by a blazing hearth, in a handsome and highly-ordered, though old-fashioned wainscot parlour, only waited the appearance of the master of the mansion, and of the Reverend Gideon Haliburton, who, having obtained leave of absence from a rather rebellious flock to visit his relations in Gallowayshire, proposed to give his company to his young friend and quondam pupil as far as Portpatrick.

Wolfe Grahame, early left an orphan, had, with the exception of the time spent at school and the university, lived wholly, till he joined his regiment, with his paternal uncle at Monkshaugh. This estate had once been of considerable magnitude, but it was now more remarkable for beauty of scenery than extent of acres. Such as it was, however, Wolfe was the heir apparent ; for his uncle, Mr. Robert Grahame, was now a bachelor of threescore acknowledged, and perhaps a few more debatable years ; and had every symptom of so remaining. While the younger brother, the father of Wolfe, had been buffeting with fortune in all the struggles and vicissitudes of a man's life, Mr. Robert Grahame, or

“ Monkshaugh,” as he was called, was wholly brought up under the care of a peevish, sickly, but doting mother, whose selfish teasing fondness might probably have revolted a boy of more spirit and better understanding; but this kindness he returned with affection equal to her own, in kind and in degree. Laughed at by the neighbourhood, the old woman considered a plague, the young man a jest, they formed a little world to each other, till their mutual cares and coddlings became the main business, as it was the chief delight, of their lives.

In childhood Master Robert had been remarkable for those delicate pink cheeks, curling locks, and black eyes of japan-lustre, which some mothers value so highly in “pretty-behaved young gentlemen” who keep their hair smooth, their hands clean, their clothes untorn, and who never fight, mount wild horses, nor go near the water. And in Monkshaugh, as in others, “the boy was father to the man.” The laird, now a little withered old bachelor, still valued in himself the remains of his boyish beauty, and piqued himself inordinately on his gentle ’haviour, and his birth as a Grahame, and a de Bruce.

As the eldest son of a Scottish family of the second order of pretence, immemorial custom had

dedicated young Monkshaugh to the study of law. But nature, as will sometimes happen, may prove too strong for custom; rebellious even against Scottish “use and wont.” He obtained an advocate’s gown, however; and the old lady read his name in the almanack: but “he was too much of the gentleman”—the old family *doer* informed his mother—“to bather his head wi’ law;” which he renounced accordingly—or which more properly renounced him. But though Mr. Robert Grahame, or Buckish Bob, as he was then called, made little progress in cultivating the favour of the eldest of the Black Graces, in other distinguished walks he was more successful. For several seasons he was a member of the Harmonic Society, and could even to the present day scrape “*Je vous dirai, ma maman*,” and two tunes and a half of Corelli on the violoncello. He had also been a director of St. Cecilia’s Hall when the inspired votaress first “drew an angel down” upon Niddry Street; and indisputably had the honour of opening several balls in the George’s Square Assembly Rooms with the most celebrated beauties and toasts of the sixties. Mr. Robert Grahame had also, in those times, been occasionally admitted to the revels of the choice spirits of the POKER

CLUB. But, eclat apart, he neither relished their wine nor their wit. Even before his mother died he was become too old for an acceptable dangler, and all unfit, with his precise and maidenly habits, for the tear and wear of manly society ; so he retired to his estate, to educate, he said, his brother's son—in fact, to superintend the hatching of his Bantams, the preparation of his jellies, and above all—for country gentlemen must have some paramount pursuit—to watch the doings out of doors and within of the newly enriched “ mushroom family” of his neighbour, Mr. Hutchen of Harlettillum, which, root, branch and off-sets, the Laird detested, nay hated, in as far as an energetic and decided sentiment could find harbourage in a breast, not absolutely without gall but destitute of great capacity of any kind. This Mr. Hutchen, or “ Hurcheon”—which last Monkshaugh said was the true name—was originally a country attorney and banker, and had been agent and trustee for himself, when pecuniary involvements made nursing necessary for his estate. He was also trustee for the Lord de Bruce, a lunatic, and the kinsman of Monkshaugh.

Monkshaugh had now ceased to visit town even occasionally, and in all matters of taste, fashion,

and wit, lived wholly in the past. Thus, every little peculiarity gaining force in retirement, he gradually lost the flattering appellation of "Buckish Bob," and, among his rustic neighbours and servants, acquired the not less significant, and more appropriate title of *Auld Pernickitie*—originally bestowed by his favourite waiting gentleman, gossip and privy counsellor, Francie, or Francis Frisel,—who was himself, with equal propriety, known in the household and country-side by the nickname of *The Whittret*.

But though so precise in manners, and altogether, it must be owned, rather a fiddling, insignificant personage, Monkshaugh was so kind in heart, and so inoffensive in conduct, that his servants and tenants bore him considerable regard. He was their property, their preserve, whom they were unwilling to see any one ridicule, backbite or plunder, save themselves.

Wolfe Grahame, who too frequently was guilty of violating the rigid decorums of his uncle's breakfast table, by clearing away before him, right and left, in season and out of season, in the grey dawn of this morning stalked across the parlour with heavy measured steps, the breakfast unharmed, his eyes cast down, his high and broad

forehead clouded with thought, his finely curved dark brows knit like those of a man in deep abstraction, or one communing with himself on some subject of painful and intense solicitude. The absence of those who so long delayed the parting meal, seemed unheeded by the young man, who occasionally in his walk paused and gazed through a window, which, deeply ensconced in the thick walls of the old mansion, looked up into a wooded glade, called the dean or den of Ernescraig, and commanded a partial view of the Pechs' Mount, a bold and rocky eminence, midway up the mountains and jutting from their sides, on which stood the Tower of Ernescraig, an ancient stronghold of the Lords de Bruce.

Once as sighing deeply he turned his eyes from this absorbing object of contemplation, he caught the keen glance of the official in waiting evidently watching his bearing, a strange struggle of mirth and malice sparkling in the small twinkling eyes, which, with the sharpness of bodkin points, peered out from a shrew-mouse visage. Francie Frisel, or the Whittret, as he was usually called from his exceeding nimbleness and agility, was a dwarfed, wizzened, elvish being, of the very smallest size of the human species in stature and girth, Laps

and Esquimaux not excluded. A century before he might have been taken for Monkshaugh's imp or familiar, though there was indeed little danger of the laird's being burned for a wizard, even in those superstitious times. The Whittret, if not a real fairy man, of which there were shrewd suspicions in the hamlet of Castleburn, was at least a foundling reared in his master's family. He held a rather anomalous situation in the now reduced household establishment, being in fact everything, and nothing,—piper, butler, and gossip, as well as the general obliging conveyancer of letters, parcels, and all sorts of intelligence, from the royal borough of Rookstown to every *farm-town*, cottage, and Ha' house in the neighbourhood.

This man of many functions, thus caught in the manner but no whit disconcerted, began to supply the large and highly burnished brass-mounted grate with fresh billets of birchwood, that sweetest of fuel, and to cheer his labours by trolling aloud the old ditty of—

“ My bonny Lizzie Baillie,
Your mother canna want ye ;
Sae let the trooper gang his lane,
And carry his portmanty,” &c. &c.

In spite of serious displeasure a smile curled the

lip of Wolfe Grahame, who well knew that he was himself the butt of this expostulatory lyric. He once again paused in his walk, and, bending down, pinched the shoulder of the stooping manikin.

“Frisel, thou art the most prying and impudent varlet that ever ran loose working mischief in an old house. What prevents me now from crushing every bone in that shrimpish body of thine, which I could so easily do?”

“No sac very easy as ye trow, Captain Wolfe. First, there is your ain kind heart to prevent ye,—forbye my skirling;—and a brave exploit it would be for a captain o’ dragoons to break the banes o’ a puir singet creature like me. But I ken ye are thinking ye saw ane in the Ernescraig wood, i’ the grey o’ the morning; but it might be my wraith, or a howlet, or a wild cat. I’ll be sworn it was a faithful silent creature, will ne’er blab to cause skaith to you, far less to ony fair leddy.”

“Leave the room, sir,” cried Wolfe, in a voice which forbade farther parley; and the Whittret obeyed; but, by a gentle slam of the door, threw down the gauntlet to his young master.

“And this,” thought Grahame, “is but a first taste. Where is it all to end? My Elizabeth! in what a fate has my rash love involved thee!”

The young man again fell into meditation, and resumed his measured walk.

The Whittret, it should be told, had no felonious intent in watching his young master's bearing, farther than what arose from discontent, that he who had so largely assisted in all former boyish pranks, should be left out when mischief more daring was going forward,—and that too, as he suspected though erroneously, under the agency of his rival, the redoubtable veteran trooper, Corporal Fugal, who had been the attendant of the Lord de Bruce, and also the instructor of Wolfe Grahame in the management of his horse, and in all other military and manly exercises.

Perched high in a window bunker of the kitchen, his usual roost in good weather, his arms folded, whistling and kicking his heels in cadence, the Whittret was addressed by Effie Fechnie, a perpendicular rigid maiden, with high shoulders, flat chest, and long pinched visage set round with close-lappet pinnars, who had for thirty years presided in the kitchen of Monkshaugh, and at last obtained the brevet rank of housekeeper; for the laird himself, without stinting her of the emoluments, exercised all the real authority of the office.

“Is the Laird no busket yet?” said she. “That weary wig o’ his!”—The Laird’s morning toilet was as tedious and elaborate as that of a French lady of the old *regime*, before the guillotine taught despatch in all affairs of the head.—“Nor Mr. Gideon come either?—wi’ a pound of dirt at ilka cloot, honest man, making a house like a midden. The mutton-ham will be brandered black, and my souple scones as tough as the widdie.”

“And the widdie wring the craigs they are to gang owre,” cried the Whittret, “for aught I care.”

Effie stayed her manual operations at the dresser, to gaze with wonderment on the enraged manikin.

“How long, Effie, have I, Francis Frisel or Fraser, commonly called the Whittret, lived in the service of the Laird of Monkshaugh and his nevoy?”

“It may be better than twa-and-twenty year since the tinklers drappet ye like a fairy-token, at our back yett, yon morning,” said Effie, drily. “Ye might no be aboon a year o’ a Christian bairn’s bouk; but as ye girmed up in my face, like a wee auld man, three score years wad na ha’e matched the tongue o’ ye. Ye ha’e gotten your bite and your sup about the toun ever since, ex-

cept the year the Laird bound ye to Lowrie Labrod the tailor,—and when ye took the pet and ran off to 'list i' the Loudons. Pity ye are o' sic scrimp stature, Francie, with your bauld soger-spirit."

"Lang or short, the house o' Monkshaugh has seen the last o' my service. I'm sworn to that ! Pernickitie has grown a perfect Nabal nigger. When I came hame frae Rookstown yestreen, after trailing a stricken hour, seeking that *Court leddies' sticking plaister*—de'il plaister him !—for the plook on his chin that the house has been held astir about, he ne'er had the grace to say, ' gude Francie—ill Francie, ha'e ye a mouth for a dram ?' but ' how do I set it ?' And the young one, that I could have spilled my reddest heart's blude for, colleaguin' wi' that auld blasting blunderbuss, Corporal Fugal. Flesh and blude cannot thole this. I'll sing ballants, or cry last speeches, play at prick-the-garter, or rowly-powly, or set up in the Wast-port o' Edinburgh wi' my razors, and shave hieland shearers at a groat to the de'il's dizzen, ere I be used this gate."

"Ye'll take pity on us yet," said the maiden, with provoking dryness, as she quietly proceeded with her household duties ; " and give us a day for repentance and amendment, ere ye withdraw such a

manful prop frae the tottering roof-tree of Monks-
haugh. But what think ye, F'rancie,—is the young
captain and the auld corporal laying their heads
thegither about that lassie de Bruce?—Weel, I
set my face clean against it. But whisht ! 'There's
Pernickitie's genty footie tippy-tippyng down
the back stair frae the blue chalmer. He has
toddled about frae kitchen to ha' this whole blessed
morning, like a hen seeking a nest, honest man."

And now in unison with a cracked bell which
sounded the breakfast hour, was heard the thin and
somewhat affected voice of Monkshaugh, crying
" F'ancis—F'ancie Frisel."

" Coming ! coming, Monkshaugh," cried F'ri-
sel. " Hand me the clear tea-kettle, lass. As it
is the last day of my sojourn within these gates, I
need not affront auld Pernickitie, puir boddie,
afore a stranger like godly Gideon. But I swear
—witness for me Euphan F'echmie—by the Black
Rood o' Scotland, that I'll be at the bottom of the
captain's secret before I'm a day aulder ! So gi'e
me the clear tea-kettle that's crooning its matins
sae bonnily, and these piping hot flour scones.—
The froth is lying on that kipper like lammer beads.
Keep a bit warm to me, Effie ; and ne'er let on
what I minted about a change. We may a' change

quarters belyve, if John Hurchcon get his will o' us. And godly Gideon's half-marrow has been below the mools a lawfu' time. Keep up your heart lass ! ye ken ye're a crook-horned auld ewe o' his ain flock, and will ha'e a chance i' this vacancy. I'll to the parlour !"

"Aye, ye have wit in your anger, Francie, to take your word wi' a warrant.—Right north side o' the hill man, (for Frisel was thought to be of highland blood.) Gi'e the laird the warst word o' your pack, and win farther ben wi' him than his honest, frugal, eident, faithfu' servants, wha gi'e him not eye-service as men-pleasers."

"True ye say, Effie," interrupted Frisel, returning for fresh supplies—"not eye-service, seeing ye have but one worth reckoning on ; and as for a man-pleaser—Whew !" The Whittret made a face and eyes, which, with upturned palms, spoke on this point more forcibly than any form of words could have done.

"Gae ye imp," cried Effie ; "your tongue is nae scandal ;" and after his departure, she thus soliloquized—"weel may I groan, lang and sair, for a bit hole to ca' my ain. Naething like ane's ain fireside ; and its a dowie thing, and a dowf for our minister who is but a handless man, to gang

hame to toom walls and a cauld hearth-stane. And there he comes riding gawsie on Jenny Geddes; and no an ill-looking man either, to be pocky-arred, and downright ugly."

Slowly and at sober pace, Corporal Fugal at the bridle, came on the long-backed, shambling, down-looking, demure mare, which bore the huge, lank, and bony bulk of the Reverend Gideon Haliburton. Gideon alighted in the wide antique court surrounded partly by old high walls, partly by hawthorn and holly bushes mixed with gueldre-roses and tall lilacs, and having a grotesque stonework fountain covered by one fine spreading old holly. From the parlour window, his host rubbing hands like withered lilies sunk knuckle deep in plaited cambric frills, surveyed the fresh arrivals, steed and rider, not without some laudable attempts at quizzing, which had a rather comical effect in the eyes of Wolfe Grahame.

This same delightful propensity of quizzing, omnipotent as love itself, pervades all earthly space—all ranks of men. The inmates of Bedlam quiz each other; and the art is as well understood, and as keenly practised in the nightly haunts of the sturdy beggar, as in the saloon of the prince. Market-women and boat-scullers are adepts in

quizzing; an Irish beggar will be found more adroit in the practice than a modern critic, though his chief aim is to quiz with smart effect. The cockney quizzes the clown; the clown retorts on the cockney. The player, whose regular trade is quizzing, hits at all ranks of life; and all ranks enjoy a quiz against the poor player "strutting his hour." Why then, might not the neat, well-dressed, spruce little Laird of Monkshaugh quiz the gaunt, uncouth, slovenly minister of the Sour-holes, without exciting the half-derisive smile of Wolfe Grahame?

The gentlemen who now exchanged the compliments of the morning, were the very antipodes of each other; but they had one point of cordial union—warm regard for the young man who was this morning to leave them. Mr. Gideon had long set down Monkshaugh in the tablets of his mind as "an ill-less, gude-less, prinkie kind o' prelatie boddie, who liked to claver about laced cravats, Bristo' buckles set in silver, and his rotten forebears, a malignant race as a' the Grahames were;"—while Monkshaugh, on his side, was not at all desirous of cultivating any particular intimacy with a rough-spun, mean-born, uncouth, schismatic person, who wore coarse shirts two in the week, and

whom, in all their past intercourse, he had never been able to impress with a due sense of his own personal claims and family dignities.

The first greetings despatched, Monkshaugh made a sly survey of the appointments of his visitor, not without serious misgivings as to the outward shews of the strange companion, voluntarily chosen for some days by a very handsome and well-equipped young officer of light dragoons.

The Reverend Gideon Haliburton was now in his sixtieth year; but he, perhaps, looked older. Tall, gaunt, in-kneed, and clumsily jointed, in walking his right side was always in considerable advance of the left, and the movements of the whole man seemed impelled by some internal piece of unwieldy, ill-oiled mechanism, which it required a strong impulse to set in motion, but which once set a-going, it appeared as difficult to arrest. Cheek-bones, which went far to justify the aspersions cast on the national physiognomy, a mouth, “cavernous and vast,” and furnished with detached streaky columns in suitable proportion, large “noticeable eyes”—colour, pepper and salt mixture,—and grizzled powerful eye-brows, constituted, together with a broad, expansive, furrowed forehead, the coarse elements of a face which, ne-

vertheless, wore an indescribable expression of the agreeable and the benevolent. The outward equipments of Gideon, though gall and wormwood to the laird of Monkshaugh, were such as, when in decent order, very well suited his rank and profession. A full suit of priests'-grey coarse cloth, made with ample allowance of skirt, sleeve and pocket flap—"made for his growing," the Whittret said—and not very often renewed, derived considerable splendour from what the minister styled "a vain superfluity" of black horn buttons, each nearly the size of Monkshaugh's Nankin-China saucers, strong shoes an inch thick in the sole, home-knit ribbed stockings of coarse grey worsted yarn, with black lackered shoe and knee buckles, a small hat, certainly not a recent purchase, and an immense grizzled wig, to which more than one grey mare had contributed the flowing honours of her tail, crowned and completed his ordinary costume. And this obstinate wig, in defiance of the hints of the Laird, and the handling of Frisel, would at all times sit awry ; and was, moreover, so constructed as to offer behind an open field, in which the craniologist might have pursued his favourite speculations undisturbed. Indeed, the honest man's favourite attitude, or employment, when en-

gaged in thought, was to curry his right knee with one hand, while the other was, with equal diligence, somewhere groping between the scalp and the wig, which thus enjoyed almost a sinecure.

Monkshaugh, who would as soon have suffered his little finger to be cut off as have appeared before a stranger in dishabile, would undoubtedly have undergone decapitation before he would have shone forth in the garb of his reverend guest. He generally, as on this morning, wore a cinnamon-coloured full suit of the finest cloth, long worn, and often very nicely brushed, no doubt, yet looking as if no such implement as a brush had ever touched its glossy nap. This dress was lined with a silk of the same hue but rather lighter in the shade, and with delicately fine snow-white linen, cambric frills, plaited at breast and hands, of which no thread looked awry, a small close-fitting, crisp, and well powdered cauliflower wig, with little winglet curls, and a slender queue. pearl-grey silk stockings, well-japanned shoes of Spanish leather, ornamented, not with those brilliantly set buckles which stirred the gall of Gideon but with smaller ones of gold, formed the neat, spruce, every-day costume of Monkshaugh. Some time afterwards when in Edinburgh, he parted with the queue,

and then looked, his country friends said, like a rat without the tail : Italian ferret came also to be substituted for the sparkling shoe-buckles—innovations which the Laird traced to the French revolution, and detested even while he gave into them.

The strong, harsh, but manly voice of Gideon, whether he powerfully uplifted the psalm to some Presbyterian tune of orthodox discord, or pierced the drowsy ears of the straggling out-posts at a tent-preaching, was equally at variance as his figure with the low and yet sharp tones of Monkshaugh's thin small voice ; so that when the Laird was in a fidgetty mood, the sonorous *haughs*, and rumbling *hems* of Gideon, acted on his nerves like an electric machine.

With one of those gurgling loud *hems*, Mr. Gideon, at this moment, clashed himself down into Monkshaugh's chair of state and precedence, which actually screamed under the unaccustomed pressure. This place of dignity the Laird had occupied ever since the decease of his lady mother, not yielding it even to his own kinswoman, the daughter of Lord de Bruce ; and this violent usurpation of his rights—this “ pushing him from his stool,” completed the civil enormities of Mr. Gideon. The

Laird could form no conception of any degree of ignorance or absence of mind, that could palliate so flagrant a breach of all decorum and good-breeding.

Wolfe Grahame still gazing on the distant tower, was unaware of this total perversion of the economy of the breakfast table, till he perceived the little petted face of his uncle. He looked to Frisel, who in a twinkling arranged matters,—first making a vain attempt to shove up Gideon, and then shouting in his ear—“ That’s the Laird’s cheyre;” while Wolfe, with a more vigorous arm, gave a fresh push and effected a dislodgement.

“ Nay, but, nevoy Wolfe,” cried Monkshaugh, his good-breeding taking alarm, “ perhaps Mr Gideon meant to be kind enough to make tea. My poor skill—”

“ Skink your tea-water yoursel’, Monkshaugh,” interrupted Gideon; “ it sets you better. I have sma’ skill o’ hussey-skep, or tea-drinking trinkum-trankums; and little-brow o’ them since I saw a professing gentlewoman wha shall be nameless, of whom I had hoped better things, ready to swerf, as a weak woman will do if a mishap come owre her wee ane, when, wi’ a bit wap o’ my coat-sleeve here, in uttering a word o’ thanksgiving, her tea-

tackle was cupit, and some bits o' platters, no the size o' limpet shells, demolished."

"I know them weel! the gudewife o' Hungeremout's dolphin and dragon auld set," said Monkshaugh.

"It matters little, Laird of Monkshaugh," continued Gideon, "whether the idol of the vain unsanctified heart be a tea-cup, a weel-mousted periwig, or the fair face of an enticing maiden."

A little sniffle of the nostril and twitching of the lip visible in Monkshaugh, seemed to appropriate one part of this free speech; and the heightened colour of Wolfe Grahame took home what remained. This, however, was not Gideon's usual style of rebuke; and it was repented on the instant, at least so far as the young man was concerned. He broke the silence by saying—

"But let us fall to—'Meat nor Mass never hindered wark.' That is a true saying, though the Pope had made it. We have a long journey before us; and '*Tempis fugit*,' Wolfe, my auld friend;—that is 'Time and tide will no man bide,' Monkshaugh."

"I studied my humanities under Mr. Thomas Ruddiman," replied the Laird, pettishly.

"An able master, nathless," said Gideon. But

fall to. We have a long journey, as I said; though auld Janet is on her mettle this morning."

"Auld Janet!" cried the Whittret, in well-affected tones of astonishment,—for his tongue had long enjoyed the privilege of the parlour. "It's no possible that the yauld mettlesome spanker, on which ye rade down the loanings this morning, is that auld, spavined, wind-galled, waulcyed jade, Jenny Geddes, whilk ye bought at Auchtermuchty fair, because 'Tam Toutup, the horse-couper, told ye she wad beck and cower on her hunkers, as she wont in worthy Mr. Ebenczer Snodgrass's aught, if the gude man wanted to utter a word o' prayer by the way-side."

There is perhaps no man whatever quite insensible to flattery on the subject of his gun, his hound, his boat, or his horse; nor was Mr. Gideon, whose good faith in all he heard said amounted to almost infantine credulity.

"Aye, but it is just Janet," replied he, grinning a gracious smile on the Whittret, "whilk, as ye rightly remember, upon the death of Moderator, the former brute, I bought of that rogue Toutup, graceless loon! wha bragged to my face, two weeks thereafter, how he had beflummed me. Well—he has gone to his long reckoning,

and Jenny is here yet,—and on the mend ye think, Francie? Douce lass! I'm no disputing but she may ha'e her ain bits o' flings; but we are used to them now; and she might fall into worse guiding. So for the sake o' her who is in a better place, and who was aye kind to beast and body, we will c'en toyte about thegither for a' our time of a sinfu' weary world."

The tawny eyes of Gideon glistened as he alluded to his deceased wife; but such relentings of nature he was accustomed to think a sinful repining at Providence. "Worms of the dust, against whom do we murmur!" he ejaculated; and added more cheerily, "But it is a world o' brave promise to you, 'Captain Wolfe, my lad, this same morning;—and if it be the will of Him, who laid the foundations thereof, who made the cloud its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band, lang, lang may ye find it sae."

There was so much of the philosophy of pure single-heartedness about Gideon, that his simple manner of receiving a joke against himself seldom failed to blunt its edge, or even to turn it against the heart of the inventor, provided there was any human flesh in that part of the jester's anatomy. It did so now.

“ Now fiend ha’e me ! ” cried the Whittret, “ if I wad na rather meet yoursel’, minister, in the loanings on auld shambling Jenny, than John Hurcheon of Harletillum, on our Captain Wolfe’s pacing ’Rabian, Saladin. De’il an he had broken his neck the first time he crossed its back ! ”

“ Mony thanks, wee man.—But oh ! Francie, is it meet to wish evil to your neighbour ; or speid-fu’ to bandy the name of that fallen spirit ? It likes him weel to be spoken of, man ; ay, e’en in idle jokes.”

“ Wha ?—the de’il ? ” cried Francie. “ If I tak’ na my Maker’s name in vain, I may surely use a little freedom wi’ the de’il’s, and wi’ his billy’s, John Hurcheon ? ”

“ And with your master’s presence ? ” said Monkshaugh, who writhed under the free allusions made to the sale of his nephew’s favourite horse to his powerful and detested neighbour, from a secret consciousness of the cause of that mortifying transaction.

The endless fiddling preparations for breakfast being at last arranged to his satisfaction, Monkshaugh requested Mr. Gideon to say grace.

The Laird had a practice—no bad one by the way—of boiling the eggs for breakfast in a small

silver skillet, under his own eye ; and when honoured with the visits of the regular clergyman of the parish, that judicious divine so managed his benediction, that it was found quite as useful as a sand-glass ; for the eggs slipped in at the commencement, were at the “ amen ” boiled to a “ single popple,” the Whittret said. It is impossible for us to give our readers any adequate idea of the importance of egg-boiling in the estimation of Monkshaugh. Yet, although he had some faint notion that Gideon might be a little discursive in his devotions, he rashly committed the silver skillet and the treasures it contained to his discretion ; a fatal confidence as it proved ! for Gideon, who never missed throwing in “ a word in season,” on this memorable era in the life of his friend, Wolfe, launched forth in an unusual strain of homely and touching eloquence ; commencing with the journey of the young patriarch into Padanaram, next going down with Joseph into Egypt, (by which time Monkshaugh began to fidget,) and following the stripling shepherd of Bethlem on his going forth, armed with a sling and the stones of the brook, in the might of the Lord of Hosts, against the gigantic Philistine ; and ending with the three children walking unscathed

in the fiery furnace, and Daniel untoached in the lion's den—that is, the city of Dublin whither Wolfe was now bound.

“ My siller pannikin, Francie !” whispered the Laird in agony to his domestic. But that worshipful serving-man, bearing in mind divers well-earned drams shabbily withheld, with upturned eyes was wrapped in high devotion, deaf to the entreaty of his master. So the eggs, begun by boiling, were finished by a sort of roasting—thus adding yet another to the three hundred ways which the genius of the French has invented for cooking eggs ; and, worse still, the favourite silver utensil was nearly converted into its original bullion.

The Laird, who, after the hint of “ making idols of China platters and mousted periwigs,” disdained to snatch with his own hand the vessel from destruction, was not however proof against this fresh vexation ; nor did he conceal his displeasure. “ Not that he minded the value of the skillet, but it had been brought into the family by the ‘ fair Grace Drummond, called the flower of Strathallan,’ and kept by the ladies of Monks-haugh ever since, for mulling wine, and making starch for their Valenciennes, Mechlin and Dresden laces.”

“ And the eggs,” quoth Frisel, “ might do for the bairns to dye, and row on the braes on Pasch Sunday, Mr. Gideon.”

“ Ay! and are they clean useless say ye, Francie,” replied Gideon, a grim smile mantling his long visage.—“ O, but it’s like marrow to my bones to get the whip hand o’ the flesh even in so sma’ a matter as the boiling of an egg!” Monkshaugh stared.

“ Hand them this way,” said Gideon.—“ And as this clayey house of our tabernacle must be maintained in some measure o’ strength, while our Ma⁴ster has work for us to do, ye’ll fetch me an oat cake from Effie, my wee man; and the back o’ my hand to your dainty breads.—And see, Monkshaugh, if your doo, or your sow, or your dog, or your cat, will chuse the wheaten flour devices of penny-leddies, baps and luggit-rows, before our ain hamely country commodities. Nature never errs in these her dumb bairns.”

“ No—nor in a kindly Scot,” said Frisel.

Monkshaugh, who prided himself exceedingly on the wheaten bread manufactured in his family, became more and more petted, fancying Gideon studiously affronted him.

“ If this be so,” said Wolfe, smiling, “ you

ought to mortify the flesh upon the wheaten bread." And he pushed various sorts before Gideon.

"And I believe ye may be right, Wolfe, my lad. It's but a carnal longing this for aiten cakes after all;" and pushing out his huge paw, he drew towards him, as what he supposed the simplest and least ostentatious sort of bread on the table, the identical "souple scone" on which the Laird had fixed his eyes and heart, and at one of which he would have delicately picked for an hour, though godly Gideon, folding them up like pancakes, obeyed the adage, and made "but one bite of a cherry."—He afterwards so unconsciously mortified the flesh, that rolls, *baps*, and breakfast bread of all sizes and denominations, Scottish and English, disappeared before him like snow in a shower.

In utter consternation, Monkshaugh, forgetting his displeasure, looked on by stealth, and at last seriously alarmed, whispered his nephew—"He'll worry, Wolfe—he'll worry—he'll do himself a mischief!—A' the hard eggs!—I could not in a fortnight eat so much, put breakfast, dinner, and supper thegither."

Wolfe smiled, but interfered not; and at last Gideon called a halt, observing, that "He liked to

rein in his appetite ; and both as a man and a Christian scorned dainty eaters, who held as much sossing about the stuffing of one miserable crow as might suffice for a bridal banquet."

This was at once applied by the Laird to his own elaborate preparation of a morsel of toast, which he employed more time in buttering than sufficed for Gideon to swallow unquestioning, at least ten souple scones ; but he considered an inuendo proceeding from such a quarter as rather complimentary to his superior delicacy and refinement, and kept his recovered good humour.

The hour of departure was now come.—The tramp of Gideon resounded through the parlour, till roof and rafters dirled. Wolfe's horse, patted by the old trooper, Fugal, stood neighing in the court, champing the bit ; Jenny Geddes emitted an emulous bray ; and the maid-servants, with tears ready to be shed, and clean aprons equally ready to dry them, lined the low-browed, arched stone hall of Monkshaugh.

Monkshaugh, who had trifled away the long morning, was now driven to extremity. Orders and counter-orders, moral counsels and prudential warnings, economical hints and medical cautions, were all huddled into the last ten minutes.

“ Ye’ll make your man (ane of your own troop will be kept wi’ least cost) keep an exact tally wi’ the washer-women—extortioning queans !—and aboon a’ thing keep free of odd stockings. Dinna forget your prayers at night when ye can help it ;” (Gideon groaned) “ for ye ken that like myself ye whiles sleep in on a morning.—It’s a trick o’ the name of Grahame, Mr. Gideon ; and the alliance o’ the de Bruce does not mend us, as we may see by that lazy cuttie ’Lizbeth, who should have been here long ere this time.—Ye have six new Banklana napkins, nephew Wolfe, forbye the fourteen auld anes. See that ye drop none of them in the mess-room ; for Major Holster tells me that all is butter in the black dog’s halse that falls bye there. And now, upon my blessing, Wolfe, try to keep the night-cap on your head till morning. Strangers will think ye were bred among runagate hieland salvages, wi’ heads o’ hair like heather cows, and no in a civilized lowland gentleman’s house.—Take down the portmanty to the court, Francie.—Servants need not hear a’ thing, Mr. Gideon”—and turning to Wolfe—“ Ye are not a bairn now, nevoy ; and ye ken weel that the clear annual rent of Monkshaugh is not what it has been. But ye have done—and I will tell it be-

fore the fact of him it has pleased you to choose for a friend—a generous and a kind part by your auld uncle; and ‘I’ll want or ye want’—I’ll reverse the motto o’ our cousins, Mr. Gideon, now that Wolfe’s credit and the family name have to be maintained among the fremit.—No’ that I would encourage extravagance; and ye ne’er were given to drinking nor dicing more than beseems a gentleman.” (Another long rumbling groan from Gideon.) “I ha’e no fears on that score.—And now, Wolfe Grahame, upon my blessing, and as ye wad not bring my grey hairs wi’ sorrow to the grave—binna that I wear a periwig—I charge you no to bring hame as a wife, to the house o’ Monks-haugh, ony lang Irish Madam, i’ the place and room of your grandmother, my ever honoured mother, of blessed memory; for she never could thole outlandish Irish leddies; they have na a hereawa’ look.”

The only specimens, by the way, of the Irish fair that the Laird had ever seen, were the tall randy wife of Fugal, a true-bred leaguer lady; and a Miss O’Brien, who had exhibited her stature and other graces at a neighbouring fair, to spectators at a groat a head.

Wolfe laughingly gave his uncle the desired

pledge that he would neither woo nor wed lady of the green island of song, short nor tall, dark nor fair ; and, Monkshaugh, mightily relieved, passed to the most solemn business of the morning—a *coup-de-theatre*, which he had reserved to overwhelm his nephew, astonish the household, and strike the irreverent seceder minister dumb forever. This was neither more nor less than bestowing on Wolfe, as a parting gift, an heir-loom of which the family had indeed some reason to be proud :—

“ Hem, a-hem.—Call up Fugal, Francie, he’s an auld soger ; and look up the Pechs’ Path and tell me what you see.”

The Laird compressed his thin lips, gave his head a few little significant nods, rubbed his lily hands, and altogether assumed a very *imposing* air as he paraded the room.

“ It’s merely a family trifle, the gift of a French King, Mr. Gideon—an auld sword of the Lord Robert de Bruce, our ancestor, which your pupil, Leddy Elizabeth de Bruce, discovered lately among some rubbish in the howlets’ tower of Ernescraig.”

Wolfe, though his mind was enchained to other and dearer interests, could not be insensible to this gift. The sword had been presented to the de

Bruce by Henry the Fourth of France,—Henry of Navarre, as Wolfe better liked to style him,—and was in every way a gift worthy of the gallant monarch who gave it, and the not less gallant soldier on whom it was bestowed. It was a desirable sort of credential for a young soldier who had to make his own way in life, and who might often encounter those who set more store by the present affluence, than the past glory of families.

“I thought your fair disciple, Mr. Gideon, our cousin, would have graced us with her presence this morning,” said Monkshaugh, “and acted as ladye love in arming her auld comrade here. Though but a lassie she is a true de Bruce. Had you but seen how grand the creature looked when she took that old blade from where she had hung it in Ernescraig hall, last year, as a proper gift for Wolfe,—who is the representative of that branch of the family,—winking as she unsheathed it too—for it’s a bit cowardly lassie when her blood is not up. ‘Give this to my cousin Wolfe,’ quoth she, ‘and tell him that Elizabeth de Bruce, with heart true as this blade, bids him be faithful and prosperous.’”

“They have got better acquaint since then,” whispered Frisel, so as only to be heard by Wolfe.

“She has the auld blood in her veiñs. Alas ! that such malady should follow it !” continued Monkshaugh, looking saddened.

“Ay—that she has, wi’ reverence,” said the Whittret, with his wonted ease, “red and warm. We saw something o’ that when the bruit went that our house was to clap up a mercenary marriage with Juliana Hurcheon, for clearing aff her father Harletillum’s bands over our land. And yonder she comes, leaning on Monica Doran, her bower-woman, as the auld ballands ca’t, with the step of the Queen of Elfland, when all her court is doing homage round her in a moonlight night i’ the merry merry May.”

Though Wolfe Grahame had good reason to believe that the lady in question would not voluntarily appear abroad on this morning, he started to his feet and advanced to the window.

“I’m wrang ; it’s but a gouden glint o’ the sun among the birk bushes I mistook for her ’broidered mantle,” said Frisel, looking from the window, while Wolfe looked over his shoulder,—and then he whispered, “Right i’ the main though.” But dreading something sinister from the kindling brow of Wolfe, the facetious Frisel ran down into the

court, as if to look for the lady, and stood below the open window carolling aloud—

Lord Thomas spoke a word, a word ;
 Fair Annie took it ill ;
 “ I never would marry a sillerless bride,
 Against my friends their will.”

“ We need wait no longer for Elizabeth,” said Wolfe. “ I daresay she has not recovered from her headach of yesterday.—Uncle, I wait your blessing.”

“ Then take it, Wolfe, heartily, and from the heart. And the sword—a-hem.” The Laird had conned a speech—a maiden speech—nay delivered it (as if in the cock-pit) to Frisel, on the former day ; but orators above all artists are liable to evil chances.

“ There was a time,” he began,—“ There was a time”—and he lifted the sword—“ when, with the generous rashness of youth,” (‘ That’s from the Castleburn minister’s second prayer,’ whispered the Whittret to Effie and the maids who had clustered round the door to view the pageant,) “ I might have entertained a passing wish to carry—a-hem—this honoured weapon of the de Bruce.”—(‘ A spindle and a whorle wad ha’e set ye better,’ whispered Francie.) “ But the dolours and tears

of my ever honoured mother—the unquahile leddy o’ Monkshaugh and Kippencreeky Wester—and the interests o’ the house o’ Monkshaugh, destined me to a mair peaceful life; and I now give, and bestow, and devise this sword of the de Bruce to you my nephew and presumptive heir, trusting that the honoured weapon of a noble de Bruce will never suffer disgrace in the honourable keeping of a gallant Grahame—a-hem.”

During this, by far the most brilliant oratorical display that the Laird had ever been known to make—for as yet there were neither Celtic Societies, nor Pitt nor Fox dinners, those hot-beds of eloquence—Wolfe had been strongly tempted to smile; but when he saw his poor, little, fidgetty, kind old uncle’s eyes glisten with mingled vanity and tenderness, his kindness checked the undutiful tendency,—he took the sword with a low bow, read the inscription on the blade—“*Le Roy me donne; de Bruce me porte*,”—kissed the gift of Elizabeth; and, while his red warm lip yet rested on the steel, secretly vowed loyalty to the gift, and love and fidelity to the giver.

“Be ye strong as Samson, valiant as David!” burst forth Mr. Haliburton. “Be that weapon in your hands the sword of the Lord and of Gideon!—

And I fear not your bravery of spirit were but the cause as clear to me. But this hounding out of runagate sogers upon a miserable country, to slay, burn, and spuillzie, is to me but a dark dispensation,—Papist land as Ireland is. Our ain brave auld Scotland, in her day of treading down and humiliation, felt this scourge,—when the red hand of the slayer was thrust into her peaceful bosom,—yea, the purple hand of bloody Cla——, a-hem.”—Gideon had got on very slippery ground beneath the roof of a Grahame.

“Let us to the road my lad;” he said more quietly, checking himself in good time. “Ye are leaving the biding place o’ your forebears in peace and credit; and in peace and credit may ye return from that schene o’ mortal strife; wi’ neither man’s blood, nor woman’s wail, to ascend to the just and never-winking heavens against ye, in the cries that pluck down vengeance.”

And now Farewells were said, and hands were unclasped.—Monkshaugh wiped his eyes, and gave fresh orders about the baggage; whispering—“do not forget a half-crown the piece to the servant queans, and a five shillings to Effie.”

Whether Wolfe stinted his bounty to this precise sum we know not; but certain it is, that *pur-*

chased blessings innumerable were showered upon the young traveller as he passed the threshold of his ancestors.

“ And what do ye deserve at my hands, Master Frisel ?” said Wolfe, as the Whittret darted to his bridle rein.

“ O ! maybe a five shillings ; but it cannot be less than a half-crown piece, to drink your health in the Grahame Arms this blessed night.—Siller never gathers mould in my pouch.”

“ Confound your impudence !—But how am I to get free of Mr. Gideon at the fords, for a couple of hours ?”

“ Now, Captain, I see you ken my way.—Trust me, and I’ll gang through fire and water for ye.”

“ Well,—but with Mr. Gideon. Must I trust to chance ?”

“ Na, na,—ye’ll trust to nae chance. By chance a man breaks his shins. Corporal Fugal would leave you to chance ; but I’m Chance’s master, Trust to me, Captain. When a man is on the ice it’s his safety to keep moving.”

CHAPTER IV.

THE PARTING.

The hart has sought his forest lair
The hind lies by his side ;
The light from Lady Janet's bower,
Flickers on Oran's tide.

Now breast it brave my bonny bay,
Thy plash she longs to hear ;
And ay she braids her gouden hair,—
Ay heuds her listening ear.

Old Ballad.

MONKSHAUGH and his maiden staff, conjunctly and severally, now returned to their household duties, and wiped away the tears of parting and the litter left by honest Gideon's "cloots ;" while that divine scrambling on at a great pace for Jenny Geddes, whose habits were much more deliberate than those of her fiery and spirited name-mother, soon overtook Wolfe and the Whittret who acted as running footman. • Soon too they lost sight, for

the time, of the pleasant abode, which, to the parting eyes of Wolfe Grahame, had never looked, through its embowering trees, half so peaceful and beautiful, in its deep seclusion, as it did on this morning.

Placed by the brink of the winding Oran, on a flat at the opening gorge of the dean, and “bosomed in tufted trees,” this sequestered nest lay apart from the world of Strathoran, in unbroken tranquillity, save in times of intestine turmoil such as the present parting.

The mansion, built at various dates, was rambling, irregular, and Janus-faced, perhaps inconvenient. But as it rises before us now, through the softening vista of years, with its venerable grey roof, steep gables broken into *corbie-steps*, awkward chimneys, sentry-box towerlets, out-shots and in-shots, and adjuncts of all forms, wings and winglets hastily clapped to in every direction, when the successive ladies of Monkshaugh got additions to their families, or the lairds an increase to their wealth ;—as we look back on it, we think it might have won even a stranger’s admiration, especially when seen in broken glimpses through those stately groves of elm and chestnut, planted so close that they diffused, when in full

leaf, an air^o of almost monastic gloom around the good old house. This was not felt within however, for there were several rooms in Monkshaugh's dwelling, looking back to the river or up into the dell, light, cheerful, and of handsome proportions. And those stately trees and continuous avenues which diffused this air of soft gloom, were, moreover, the pride of the successive proprietors, and had, for time immemorial, given shelter to the most flourishing colony of rooks in the whole strath. In spring indeed, when those black-robed gentry are so clamorous about ejections and marriage-settlements, the cawing around the old house became perfectly deafening and intolerable; but one would have missed it too; and then one needed only to steal up into the dean among the birch and and broom, or down to the river's edge among the low spreading aller and hazel bushes, to be instantly free of the rookery din, listening only to the low churm of those woodland warblers who so quietly arrange all their love affairs with a sweet song.

Monkshaugh's small estate lay near the centre, and on the sunward side, of this romantic strath, which, stretching nearly east and west, forms a district called by the inhabitants "The four hill-side parishes." A screen of pastoral hills,

lofty yet green as emerald to their very summits, rose in sunward slopes and abrupt juttings behind the variety of knoll and holm, pasture and woodland, level spreads of cultivation and rough fallows, which were picturesquely scattered, blended and grouped in the open valley. In many places the hills were furrowed by ravines and chasms ; and those glades and *deans* which, more or less clothed with natural wood, winded far up into their recesses, sent each down its tributary brooklet to join the Oran ; —the Oran, which, bounding and leaping from its birth-place, somewhere far up among the convoluted mountains at the head of the strath, like a gamesome child in its play, gradually became more gentle in its progress, till among the holms of Monkshaugh, in “ many a winding bout,” it demurely glided on, gracefully waving its silver links, like a young court beauty managing the train of her birthday robes.

The “ Hill-side parishes” had been forfeited property, and were now broken into very small possessions. The Aiks, The Cleuch, The Holm, The Milnton, The Arns, and many other places, cot or Grange, or Ha’-house of noticeable pretence, lay scattered in the immediate vicinity of Monkshaugh ; but far above all, high, stately and

apart, lord paramount of the strath, rose in its pride the dark Tower of Ernescraig, the spot on which the eyes of Wolfe Grahame were even yet riveted with interest the most intense.

To avoid the hamlet of Castleburn, the travellers were obliged to make the circuit of nearly the whole arable part of Monkshaugh's domain. With the Whittret trotting or bounding on before, to open stiles, or remove temporary fences, they rode forward through brown fallows, sweet close-cropt pastures, and green loanings :—verdure and herbage, and bushes every where—and here and there one of those magnificent chance-betropt trees which gave so beautiful a character to the small property. This fine embellishment it owed, along with many others, to the good taste—the prescient taste—of one of the family, who had been educated abroad, had travelled much, and who was known in its local traditions as “The Lord of Session.” These noble trees were now nearly of a century's growth; and they had flourished in a kindly soil. They lived in the memory of every young person who left the strath; and each individual and group had its distinctive appellation. There were the “Marquis's Aik,” so named from the great Montrose—“The Three

Sisters"—“ The Green Maidens”—and “ The Minister’s Bush,” where a godly divine of the persecuting times, who once had a cure of souls in the parish, was wont at midnight to meet, after due citation, the enemy of mankind, to do battle either by the *Word* or the *Sword*, in defence of men’s souls : so that each tree, if it wanted a Dryad, still had its legend.

“ The Minister’s Buss,” said Frisel, striking his wand on the grotesque uptwisted roots of the hoary tree, whose bent boughs kissed the turf.—“ Ye have often heard of him, Mr. Gideon ? his name is savoury in this parish yet. He saved soul and body of auld John Yule’s father, who was his man, and like a rash, venturesome fool, scooged in the hollow hour of midnight among thae branches, to hear what Satan could have to say to a godly minister. When power was nae langer given the Enemy to buffet the servant of the Lord, who would not yield him an inch of dominion—na, nor a hair’s breadth. ‘ Will ye gi’e me the silly bird in the bush then ? ’ said cunning Clootie, wha, like the tax-man, is aye loath to gang aff toom-handed.—‘ The bird in the buss is no mine to give,’ the minister got power to say : ‘ To his Maker I commend him ; ’ and wi’ that the Enemy vanished,

with a yell that shook the castle o' Stirling, and wakened the birds on 'The Bass'; and auld John Yule's father drappit out o' the tree like a clod, clean dead at the minister's fit for a time. We ne'er have had the like o' him till we got yoursel', Mr. Gideon. I trow auld John Yule's father sought nae mair listening. But think ye to bestow a parting word on us the day, minister?"

Gideon, our excellent friend, was not wholly insensible to flattery. He gave a kind of grunting assent to the remark of the Whittret; and at last fairly gave in to the proposal that they should advance on Wolfe, after crossing the fords, and drop a passing word of exhortation to the colliers of Pitbauchlie, a generation which undoubtedly required something of the kind.

The fords of Oran were passed. On the side which they had now gained, the ground rose rapidly by a winding path closed in by steep banks, and twisting and twining back on itself, like a spiral staircase, till clearing these banks, it unfolded its maze on a jutting point in the ascent, which gave Wolfe to see the entire sweep of his native landscape, lying in the dewy freshness and soft repose of the still early hour, as if to imprint its farewell aspect on his heart, in lines which time

was never to efface.—Here he paused to wait for his companions.

Gideon had considerably eased Jenny of her load, and was dragging her up, setting a stout heart to a steep brae, earnestly engaged in conversation with the Whittret.—“ I shall ponder what ye have propounded, Francie.—A fool may give a wise man counsel,” he was heard to say—and then standing by Frisel.—“ A goodly heritage”—he looked over in the direction of Monkshaugh—“ A goodly heritage, Captain Wolfe, by green pastures and still waters.”

“ I’m thinking Captain Wolfe’s thoughts are ranging higher than the green holms o’ Monkshaugh, and the silver links o’ Oran, this same morning,” said Frisel.

“ Praised be His name that has raised the youth’s thoughts that same road, Francie !”

“ To the Tower o’ Ernescraig yonder, minister”—and Frisel laughed. “ No need o’ an ingan for the bonnie, blue, bleared cen yonder this morning.”

“ Sheugh ! ye fule bo’ddie,” cried Gideon, pitching his manly leg over the back of Jenny Geddes.

“ The minister has a bit o’ duty at Pitbauchlic,” said Frisel demurely—“ If ye wad just tarry here a blink, and overtake us at your leisure, Cap-

tain."—And the young man was by this management left alone gazing on the Tower.

Steep and high where the mountain opened its hollow bosom at the head of the *dean*, there started sheer up a bluff promontory, called by the country people " 'The Pechs' Mount," from its artificial appearance. A narrow grassy isthmus connected this abrupt promontory with the hills behind ; and on it, perched like an eagle's nest dallying with the storm, rose the Tower of Ernes-craig. The mountains' sides closed darkly upon the Tower ; and yet in its height it was seen afar off in all directions, predominating over the surrounding country, like the spirit of fallen chivalry.—Ernes-craig Tower and the surrounding scenery, had been fancifully, and not unaptly compared to the bird from whence it took its name—to a falcon on the swoop, ready to pounce on its prey. The mountains, stretching out on each side, formed the sweeping wings, the promontory, the body, and the tower itself, the proud crest of the noble bird. In days that were past this comparison might have held in several other respects. At the grassy neck or isthmus, which, like a natural bridge, linked the Pechs' Mount to the mountains, and afforded a roundabout access, and the only safe one to the Tower, the hill streams dashed

down through the yawning chasms, whose fissures and rents still shewed where the promontory had been torn from the mountain's side. After sweeping round its base they united their waters, thus forming a sort of natural moat. The place thus strong by nature, had, in its prouder day, been carefully fortified by art ; but it was now fallen into considerable decay. It had suffered in the wars of Montrose ; and had been surprised and spoiled by private bands of the frontier *gillie muhl dhu*. Yet so late as the year 1745, it had afforded shelter to the vicinage, upon an alarm of the approach of the rebel army ; for the people hereabout were mostly *whigs*, though a few gallant Grahames and dashing Drummonds still clung to the royal name of JAMES.

The Tower, like a mountain, here turned its back upon the quiet valley, and opposed its rough front to battle with the stormy north. From the high ground where our young traveller stood, though the strath lay deep below, the edifice, was, as the crow flies, at no great distance. Rising in pride on its own mountain side, banners of mist still floating round tower and battlement, it hung to his ardent gaze, a brave picture on the green walls of earth ! He thought he could have touched it—touched at least one little casement

looking sunward and southward, over tower and town, and all up and down that fair strath, even from the place where the infant Oran had its birth in the glens, to where, swollen to a “rank river,” it rushed into the sea. As Wolfe still gazed and gazed, he came at last to fancy that he could see the morning air stir the streamers of ivy that hung around the bower window, yea, stir the very tresses of a fair head, resting mournfully upon the little palm of one who had so often, and of late so anxiously, watched his approach from that high lattice.

The imagination was resistless.—“I will return, were it but for five minutes,” thought he; and throwing his bridle to the Whittret, he darted down the bank with the speed of a roc-buck.

“Ay, ay! I have lang jaloused,” muttered that sagacious waiting gentleman, “what would be the upshot of a’ this fishing, and shooting, and cur-dooing i’ the dean woods. But see ye, my young gentleman, if ’Lizbeth de Bruce’s brent brows and jimpy waist will clear aff Harletillum’s band?—Ours is a doomed house, that’s clear;—and yet, its a jewel of a lassie.

“Wha is?” said Gideon, whom he had now overtaken.

“Wha but the Leddy ’Lizbeth de Bruce! to whom

I never carried the value of a twalpenny lace for her jimps but I was ordered something,—maybe a tass o' brandy, maybe a quaigh o' ale,—maybe baith. No that I mind the drink ; but when a leddy or gentleman holds me in remembrance it's like putting a respec' on me ; and I think ten times mair o't than it's a' worth."

Gideon hemmed drily ; and they jogged on quietly together towards the collier town of Pitbauchlie, where Wolfe was expected to join them.

The formal approach to Ernescraig Tower was by the hamlet of Castleburn, from whence wound up into the mountain gorge that narrow irregular causeway, lying along the ridge of the ravine, called the Peechs' Path, which, together with the Peechs' Mount, was so named from their construction being ascribed, by popular tradition, to the Picts ; though the learned and reverend Dr. Draunt, in his Statistical Account of the Parish of St. Serf, gives a very different etymology, deriving the name from the Scottish verb *to perch*, *i. e.* to puff and blow, as a fat man does on climbing an ascent,—a derivation which the honest man's personal experience strongly confirmed. Not so the experience of Wolfe Grahame, who darted up the mount by a way even more steep and inac-

cessible than the ordinary ascent,—a path threading the woods through the hollow of the ravine, by which, for months past, he had been in the habit of visiting the beautiful and lonely inhabitant of the decayed fortress, his rashly made and fondly loved, though unacknowledged wife !

From the chill and pale grey dawn, and long before the faint shadowy light could have enabled any other eye to discern distant objects, had this young woman, kneeling at her high casement, watched the fords of the Oran, and every partial glimpse of the road which the breakings of the ground or the opening trees permitted her to see—to see *him* return home after he had left her, and again, a weeping interval spent, to see him depart “forever !”—as her sad heart whispered, and sunk into deeper sadness ;—for who ever parted, for the first time, from the object of devoted, and passionate, and engrossing affection, without feeling that it must indeed be—forever ! And to her Wolfe Grahame was the engrossing object of every affection, loved as they alone can love, who in life have but one interest, one hope, and, in the fulness of that, desire and wish for none other.

A solitary and unclaimed, but nevertheless a fair and a happy child,—a solitary, unregarded, but,

till now, a light-hearted and happy girl, the past life of Elizabeth de Bruce had been one long midsummer night's dream. She had grown up in solitude and freedom, her young imagination in the clouds, but her heart on the dear green earth, finding, in the thousand forms of loveliness and delight scattered in her lonely path, objects to excite her natural sensibility, and in the recollection that all neglected as her existence had been, she was not the less a de Bruce, enough to nourish in her mind the self-respect and graceful pride of true nobility: till Wolfe Grahame came, and a brighter heaven and a yet greener earth unfolded, and the pride of birth was forgotten in the dearer pride of affection; for to be his was happier than even her fondest brightest dreams, and now—she was his.

Elizabeth had seen her lover cross the fords. They had already parted. She “turned her eye and wept;” and when she again looked up there was no where to be seen that figure which her vision could have singled out on the instant among tens of thousands. His companions were slowly crossing the moor. Chiding the inadvertence which had thus lost sight of him while he might still be seen, and, with love's own superstition,

shrinking from this disastrous omen, she was still kneeling at her casement, carelessly wrapt in a long white dressing-gown, the redundancy of her beautiful hair sweeping the floor, her brow resting on her hands, chill, pale, and trembling, and in the attitude of heart-struck abandonment, when her ear even painfully true of late to the slightest sound, caught the springy step, the light breathings,—and, starting with an exclamation of transport, the marble statue was on the instant touched into life—warmed into a bright and glowing form.—“He was come again! She would hear his voice! Hear him bless her, and bid her be of better cheer; and again and again vow to love her, and think of her ‘every day of the hour.’ She would again hang on ‘that nether lip,’ to touch which she would have travelled barefoot to Palestine.”

“My Elizabeth! how is this! Cold, trembling, half-dressed. I must chide you for this.”

“Trembling but not cold,” replied Elizabeth. “But do then—stay and chide me.” And, in tones yet softer, she whispered—“How kind was this return! I shall part with you now with courage so much firmer,—if it must be?—Nay, do not shake your head. I will not talk so idly again.

But you look so grave. Oh! surely⁴ you are come to warn me of new evil. Tell it out then—I have courage for it all.—They cannot unmarry me!”

“I trust not,” said Grahame, smiling and caressing her. “Folly only—pure folly—brought me back, Elizabeth.”

“Ah, rather dear, dear wisdom!” whispered Elizabeth.

“I wished also to apprise you,” continued Wolfe, “that I have prevailed with Mr. Gideon to accompany me in a search of the woman who certainly knows some of the strange mysteries connected with your birth—with the conflagration I mean of C’ambuskenneth Lodge.”

“The disastrous star of my birth,” said Elizabeth. “I know it is so. But have you seen my nurse? She pines to see you.”

“Then I trust she means to speak out,” said Wolfe. “How many perplexities could she not unravel! how easily ‘clear up the mystery of your singular fate! But she is obdurate in her silence. Well—be the issue what it may, fate itself cannot now make you less fondly mine. There is hope for us yet. Then smile on me once again before I leave you, my own Elizabeth.”

A fond but silent embrace was interchanged,

and then followed much anxious domestic discourse, with unavailing regrets, passionate adieus, and fond and melancholy anticipations all intermixed.

“Should any emergency arise, my love, from the state of my uncle’s affairs, or from our union, you may rely for all aid and counsel on our friend Gideon, safely and with propriety. He may not quite understand you, but he loves you, and me for your sake.—How many good hearts have you drawn to me in giving me your own, Elizabeth!—He is an honest and honourable man, though not exactly after the fashion of this world’s honour; more shame for it perhaps. And yet, Elizabeth, how in this hour it wrings my heart to confide to another, even to worthy Gideon, the dear privilege of watching over your happiness!”

“Fear not for me,” whispered Elizabeth.—“Fear not for me, while this generous wish is yours. The love which makes me weak makes me strong also. Ills and trials may await us both; but happiness—mine—is safe—anchored here—in the keeping of honour and affection;” and she rested her head, as if in token of confidence, on the bosom of her lover. But again the woman prevailed. “Yet, O dearest, dearest! if I should live to find you changed—estranged. Let me not think of it.—

Nay, you shall not smile at my woman's fears to-day. Kneel with me rather here—where we have a thousand times in fondness met and vowed affection never-ending; and pray to our God to restore us to each other with truth unimpaired, love undiminished."

They breathed this silent prayer on the altar of each other's lips.

"I can bear to part with you now," whispered Elizabeth.—"Nay, to send you hence.—Go then, dearest and only friend of your poor Elizabeth; and let us emulate each other in proving that though the ties that bind us may have been rashly formed, they were not made to be repented of."

Pale, very pale, and shivering, but outwardly calm, with a long silent embrace she glided out of the arms that clasped her, sunk down and hid her face where she had before knelt. And they had parted! how again to meet in a world, whose direst curse is wavering fidelity, or change, or coldness of heart!

Wolfe took his way to the hamlet, where, in the corner of the "school green," there then stood, looking as if it grew, the turf cabin of Monica Doran, the nurse of Elizabeth; a widow who was thought to have seen better days, and who used

the pure English speech, or what the inhabitants of Castleburn fancied such. Her original residence was Ernescraig; but from the time that Elizabeth was four years old Monica had lived in Castleburn, in respected poverty, the jealousy with which she was at first viewed having given way before her kind and courteous manners, and tried worth. The solitary matron had long supported herself by needle-work, in which she was, even on the admission of the erudite Monkshaugh, profoundly skilled; but her sight had failed, and she now lived by knitting, and by spinning flax to a delicate fineness, unknown in that part of the world, which she also made into thread, managing herself the whole of the pretty, and petty manufacture, of twisting, bleaching, &c. on the Oran side.

The circular hut of Monica was so small, that but for a slender filament of blue smoke, scarcely more voluminous than that which on a frosty morning trailed through the dean woods after Corporal Fugal's tobacco pipe, and a single pane of glass, the bright eye of the dwelling, it might have been mistaken for a mossy hillock. A few yards of garden-ground stored with pot-herbs, and those herbs employed in the rural pharmacopeia, lay at the right gable; and over this hung three grotesque

elder bushes, growing by the brisk mill-lead, and affording shade to the hovel, and arms and ammunition to “ the scholars.”

“ The scholars” had been Goody Doran’s delightful occupation for many of their quickly succeeding generations. In her cabin refuge and consolation was found in all the multifarious cases of school-day hardship and distress. Her kind expostulation made the trembling truant return to his task ; and, at her soothing, the good-natured weeping dunce dried his tears and renewed his efforts. In all cases of cut fingers, broken brows, or sprained ancles, her unfec’d surgery was sovereign ; and the little ones demanded her cares and kindness as their right, in the full confidence of her love, and with a devoted submission to her sway, which neither *palmies*, *pandies*, nor *stendies*, nor yet the more refined modern fool’s cap could have obtained. Day by day, the rough shelves suspended from her low roof might be seen loaded with the hard-boiled eggs, small bottles of milk, and slices of cheese and oaten cakes, deposited by “ the scholars ;” each ration rudely marked with the initials of the little owner. These rations were in summer quickly consumed beneath Goody Doran’s bourtrees, in winter by her frugal,

and yet cheerfully bright hearth. The scrupulous integrity, unfailing kindness, and humble dignity of manners which marked this old woman, whose heart seemed instinct with the love of childhood, made a deep impression on the memories of many of those young creatures ; and in after life, with the recollection of school-day happiness, rose the image of Goody Doran. Many substantial marks of this kind recollection were tendered to her ; but they were declined with a spirit which her neighbours sometimes called proud. There are points on which every one has a right to be proud. She never refused the aid of Elizabeth de Bruce.

The heir of Monkshaugh, who rode to school on a roan pony, the Whittret trotting by his side with ample allowance for the mid-day refec-tion, might have been supposed above Monica's tender offices ; yet his uncle's horror of blood, and still more of blood-stained garments, put even him sometimes in her reverence ; and though her kindness like the sun shone equally on all, the generosity and high spirit of this boy, displayed in various little instances, made him an especial favourite, during the few months that he attended the village school. •

As Wolfe approached the little tenement, once so mighty in his imagination, now diminished to a toy, yet corresponding exactly in all its proportions to the clear image of his memory, he recalled, together with Shenstone's old Dame, the engaging and very sweet picture of a country school, given in the *Memoirs of Marmontel*—nature, even in France !

“ I could not leave the country without seeing you, Monica,” said Wolfe, as soon as the old woman, with her old-fashioned and superstitious good-breeding, had laid aside her work and seen her visiter seated to her liking.

“ I have just come from your friend Elizabeth,” he continued, “ who informs me that you wished to see me.—Odd enough, considering how you have shunned my inquiries for many a month back.”

“ I shunned you then—and I desire to see you now, Captain Wolfe Grahame,” said the old woman impressively.—“ And can you not divine the cause ? Have you not daringly mingled your fate with the destiny to which I am bound.”

“ Daringly, perhaps, but not presumptuously,” said the young soldier with pride ; “ nor unsanctioned by the mysterious being for whom you act.

See you this scroll?"—and he shewed a letter—
"this—delivered to me in the dean wood by a wandering mendicant woman, a part of your mysterious machinery I doubt not?"

"That is not said like Captain Wolfe Grahame," replied the old woman.—"But was this scroll seen by our Elizabeth."

"Our Elizabeth!—Monica—if it is thus you feel for her, and I doubt it not—why, why withhold from me the means of doing her right?—But this paper was not meant for the eye of Elizabeth, though written, I cannot doubt it, by—*her mother.*"

He fixed his eyes intensely on the old woman, who started; and, as the colour mounted to her faded cheek, exclaimed—"Her mother! Who then told you that she had a living mother? 'The Bride of de Bruce—does she live?'"

"I cannot doubt that the mysterious being who has for years supplied all the wants of Elizabeth, anticipated all her wishes, loaded her with unvalued luxuries,—her good genius as she fondly styled her,—is a mother, and a fond one, though years of silence and neglect have made Elizabeth conclude that she lives no longer. Yet that she lives this scroll is evidence: then why conceal

her name from me? The unhappy wife of the more unhappy de Bruce—has she never been acknowledged as such? Do her own relations not know her claims?”

“Alas, too well!” said the old woman. “But in her own time she will reveal herself—that most injured lady—the Bride of de Bruce! Then tempt me no farther. I have not withstood the tears of Elizabeth, looking in my face with the very eyes of that mother, to yield to a stranger’s prayer. But the day will come. It shall—it must—I shall live to see it—when justice will be done—the day for which I have travailed, and longed, and prayed.—Was it for nothing that I,—old, and withered, and feeble as I am, gave up friends and native land, and lived among the strange people of a strange faith?—and feared that I might die among them,—without confession, without pardon, almost without hope, burrowing among these black ‘walls, which nothing could brighten save the smile of Heaven upon the discharge of duty—perilling my soul’s salvation?—Ah! not for nothing! Then tempt me no farther: my troth-plight is in another’s keeping.”

“God forbid that I should urge you, Monica!” said the young man, “though I still think you

are influenced by very idle scruples. The mother of Elizabeth has confided her to my care. Is the trust less precious than that which I now solicit? Read this:—but your eyes are dim. I shall read for you.”—And he read a scroll which, without signature or date, contained the following words:

“ You love Elizabeth. You have gained her heart.—Dowerless and unfriended you have wooed her for your bride.—Her mother gives her to you—the child of misery, if not of shame—and reckons every hour an age till she can bless the union which will rescue Elizabeth from a fate dark as that of her unhappy mother.”

“ Unhappy indeed !” sighed the old woman. But you are going, Captain Grahame, to a land of violence and blood ;—of this I wished to warn you—a land divided against itself—brother contending in mortal strife against brother—and the cold stranger trampling on both. Yet beware ye ! and if ye love Elizabeth, spare her kindred !”

“ I knew, or I suspected as much,” said Grahame. “ And now, Monica, as you would perchance save me from sin and remorse, give me some clew to the maternal kindred of Elizabeth.”

“ Wolfe Grahame, this is too much,” cried the old woman, rising in increased agitation. “ Go in

peace ! and God speed you, and shield you, and deal with you as you shall deal by her to whom my lees of life are dedicated."

She waved her hand as if she wished him gone ; and Wolfe, returning her salutation, held on his way ; and was scarcely aroused from the reverie into which this conversation had plunged him, when he entered the collier village of Pitbauchlie, two miles distant on the open moor.

And here great was his amusement, though his wonder was not much, to see the Whittret, with a serio-comic visage, mounting guard at a barn door, over a tall tripod stool covered with a scanty crumpled whity-brown towel, on which was placed a pewter trencher with some halfpence strewed over its surface, "few and far between,"—while loud through the circumambient air rolled and rumbled the voice of Gideon, in earnest exhortation.

"As I kenned nā how lang ye might tarry, Captain, I behooved to set him to preach," said Frisel, "to keep him in order and patience ; but we are weel through now : we have just a word to gi'e to the auld generation, and a word to the young generation, a word to saints, and a word to sinners,—a word o' consolation, and a word o' ter-

ror,—eighteen heads in all,—and we'll after ye like a shot. The congregation may be like six auld wives, and three or four bairns,—so that is about two heads and a half to ilk ane: for mysel', I'm, as ye may see, attending the offering." And he cast his eye on the collected halfpence, of which Gideon, bountiful in pious discourse, certainly knew nothing; nor was it intended that he should.

CHAPTER V.

EARLY DAYS.

“ Beneath her father’s roof, alone
She seemed to live ; her thoughts her own ;
Herself her own delight :
Pleased with herself, nor sad nor gay,
She passed her time ; and in this way
Grew up to woman’s height.”

WORDSWORTH.

ELIZABETH DE BRUCE had been brought in her second year to the old Tower of Ernescraig, by Monica her nurse, she knew not from whence. Her uneventful story from that period may be best traced in her own recollections.

Elizabeth remembered herself from her third year, a lonely child for whom no one seemed to have any peculiar affection, save Monica Doran ; and after a time Monica left her ; for Mr. Hutchen, the agent of Lord de Bruce, thought the old nurse a useless appendage to the Ernescraig establishment, which thenceforward consisted only of

an old man who took care of the place, and his wife and daughter, who between them managed a cow or two, and attended to the wants of the lonely girl. Elizabeth had no distinct recollection of how she had first learned the calamity of her father. This knowledge appeared like intuition, for no one, so far as she could remember, had ever spoken to her of the unhappy condition of the Lord de Bruce. He had indeed been deranged even from the period of her birth, and was understood to be now living abroad.

From year to year she lingered thus, removed from the society of children, and nearly ignorant of their common sports and occupations. Yet was the life she led not without its own pleasures. The spirit of young life was stirring in the solitary child. Every bird, and animal, and flower, and plant, was her companion, endowed by her fancy with life and speech ; and every well remembered beggar, her friend and instructor, for good or ill as it might happen. A store of ideas and images was thus daily accumulating, gleaned from many furtive sources, and from persons the most opposite in habits and character. The tailor who marched from grange to grange, followed by his apprentice bearing *goose* and *labrod*, like the knight of old

romance followed by his squire,—the lean lank weaver, and the daily assemblage at the Towerburn mill, were of the number of her instructors : So were Goody Doran, the Whittret, and Corporal Fugal Scrimmager, once her father's servant.— Monkshaugh, though dubious about her descent, and far from satisfied with the mysterious marriage of his noble kinsman, was nevertheless scandalized at the shameful neglect of the little girl, and undertook to fashion her manners, for which purpose Elizabeth was at sundry times invited to drink tea at his mansion ; and in her eighth year was gravely presented with a copy of Gregory's Legacy, accompanied by a suitable exhortation. She also received so many cautions against loud speaking, bursting into mirth or song, and careless bounding up or down stairs, that Monkshaugh became a tiresome resort ; and Elizabeth soon preferred saying her catechism to Mr Haliburton to shewing her sampler to the Laird.

A mother who had studied many, or indeed any of the modern systems of education, might not have been satisfied with the training of Elizabeth in her tender years ; but such it was. A store of materials was thus collected to which her own mind must give form, from which her own powers must

extract either poison or nourishment. At five years of age Elizabeth had travelled all undoubting through the old, and now, we fear, almost exploded legendary lore of the nursery,—wept over the “Babes of the Wood,” while their sweet innocent images haunted her as a real presence,—and already admired him of the Bean, renowned and beloved more than all the peers of Charlemagne, admitting no rival to him in her affections, save always the magnanimous vanquisher of the Red Cow. How full of fancy,—how pregnant with enjoyment was the old literature of the nursery !

If thus learned at five, by the age of seven Elizabeth had a larger collection of old Irish and Scottish ballads, each to its own tune—and that often a very fine one—and of metrical and other legends, than any individual in the “Hill-side parishes” excepting Frisel, who a century or two earlier might have figured as a Troubadour, or a Harper at the least. The mill, the moss, the shelter of the shepherd’s chequered grey plaid, which the little girl did not disdain in summer, and the “rockings” of the winter fireside, with a memory singularly tenacious for whatever she loved, all contributed to swell her traditionary stores. Yet with all this liveliness of fancy and quickness of

apprehension, Elizabeth had made so little progress in useful learning, that at a "Diet of examen," held by Mr. Haliburton in the Tower Mill—the only "dict," Frisel said, that he dealt in—her profound ignorance drew down the severe rebuke of the minister.

The dark blue eyes, full of spirit and intelligence, flashed through the profusion of beautiful ringlets to which Fugal had transferred all the care he formerly bestowed on the mane of her father's charger—flashed anger and defiance; and then filled with passionate tears. Hiding her face on her little arm Elizabeth sobbed out—

"Who is there in all the world to tell me my lesson and my questions? I have no father—no mother—and Goody Doran has left me."

The appeal was felt by all present, and particularly by Gideon, who soothed and caressed the little maid in his own uncouth way—a very gentle bear—and in fitting language told her on whose care the orphan and the friendless may ever rely. And Elizabeth wept on his bosom those tears which rob sorrow of its sting.

But John Trann, the warder of the Tower, found himself bound in self-defence to rebut part of her statement.

“ A bauld spirit,” said John—“ I ha’e tried to break her in, and targed her on ‘ The Single Beuk’ divers rainy Lord’s nights ; but there never was a more rampant instance o’ the power of the Enemy, and of indwellin’ corruption than in that bonnie bairn, fair as is her face. Gi’e her ‘ Gil Morice to the Greenwood,’ or ‘ The Young Tam Lane,’ or sic profane blethers, minister, and she will lilt them aff at a hearing, tune and words, were they as lang as Chevy Chace ; but for ae sentence o’ the instruction which causeth not to err, it wadna stick till her if ye wad fley her alive.”

“ Nae wonder the bairns are boobies, when John Trann turns dominie,” said the Whittret, sneeringly.

The doctrine of John was, however, well adapted to the meridian of Gideon’s belief ; so after an application to the trustee, Mr. Hutchen, which did not obtain even the courtesy of a reply, the little girl was submitted to the joint tutelage of Gideon, and Monica Doran, who, after a long and mysterious absence, returned about this time in deep mourning weeds, and settled in a hut by the village school-house.

This formed a new era in the life of Elizabeth. The Bible was her first and only school-book ; and

the preliminary drudgery being rapidly surmounted, and her lively sensibility and imagination once fairly excited—what a world of wonder, interest, and delight, burst on her unfolding mind ! Before three months had elapsed, her young fancy was dwelling by the fountain in the wilderness, with the son of the bondswoman ; or journeying forth in hope with the youthful patriarch dreaming by his ladder of vision ; or going down into Egypt with his beloved son. Those whose early progress in letters has been smoothed and forwarded by all the trickery and appliance of modern system, can hardly comprehend how deeply the picturesque incidents and varied characters of this most poetical of all volumes, lay hold on the minds of those children who have known no other literature.

Judith, and Jael, and Rachel, beautiful and beloved, and so exquisitely womanly even in her frailties, Elizabeth could not yet fully understand ; but there were other, and exhaustless sources of delight. The infant Moses hid in the ark of flags, and the little Hebrew maid watching afar off the fate of the future lawgiver and champion of the people of God,—the young shepherd of Bethlehem, “ ruddy and of a fair countenance,”—the devoted daughter of Jephthah,—and Josiah the pious

infant King of Israel,—and Ruth the gentle daughter of Naomi:—these were now the familiar objects of the neglected child's study, as she con-
nected not a task but enjoyed a treasure beneath the
houghtree bushes, dreaming of them all night as
well as all day, and investing her village acquaint-
ances with their several attributes and charac-
ters.

“ Thus the foundations of her mind were laid.”

The life of Elizabeth contained very few adven-
tures; but every young life, however obscure,
has its own wonders, its own interests, its own
charm. She had, moreover, one real adventure to
which her memory clung with singular pertinacity,
though it had happened in her sixth year.

Elizabeth “lived i' the sun,” and hardy and bold
as a gipsy's brat, often made very distant excu-
sions into the hills and glades, from that season
when the birds first build their nests even till the
last nuts had dropped in the hazel copse, and the
sloes mellowed in the autumn frosts. Her frequent
lengthened absences gave little uneasiness to her
plodding guardians of the Tower, till once on a
July night evening closed in, the summer moon rose
with all the pale stars, and still the little girl came
not homeward. John Trann being very sleepy, ob-

served to his alarmed womankind that “Leddy ’Lizabeth wad cast up sooner than a bow o’ meal,” and went to bed. But the women less philosophic alarmed the hamlet. The people rose in the zeal of humanity ; and pool and stream, dell and dingle, were searched ; and at last the truant girl was found by Frisel sunk in soft moss, soundly sleeping under a sheltering bush.

Elizabeth’s account of this adventure to Monica Doran, was not a little singular. At noon of the preceding day she had met a beggar or gipsy woman in a red cloak, who with stories and apples had allured her on to a wild scene in the hills, called “the Linns o’ Cleuch ;” and there introduced her to a lady, resplendent, according to Elizabeth’s history, as the Queen of Elfland, if not that very Queen herself. With this lady she had staid all day in a cave. She had given her fruit and cake, and wept over her, and fondled her, and taken her promise never to forget one who so dearly loved her, and came thus to see her—never to forget her when she should be far away. All this Elizabeth affectionately promised, and wept in her turn—wept herself to sleep. She remembered no more till the Whittret awoke her ; and the splendid apparition was fled.

Monica Doran treated the whole as a natural vision of sleep in the hills on a starry night, and counselled her to be silent about it; and in a little time it was forgotten in the hill-side district, or only remembered by the superstitious as a fairy adventure, into which the child had been nearly entrapped. It was, however, in the main circumstance, too striking ever to be forgotten by Elizabeth; and, as she grew up, Monica Doran would shake her reverend head, and sigh at the minute accuracy of her description of the lady's appearance. Of this singular adventure of her childhood she had often talked to Wolfe Grahame; and in the previous season, they had twenty times visited the "Linns o' Cleuch," while Elizabeth recounted anew every look, every gesture, every well-remembered word of her whom, as she grew up, she fondly called mother. But how—or why?—Conjecture was vain.

Wolfe had also once dropped in, under some feigned pretext, on the Saturday-night computations, at the Grahame Arms in Castleburn; and adroitly led to this old tale.

"Weel do I mind it," said John Trann, solemnly. "But I think ye ordered in another stoup o' liquor, Captain?—Weel do I mind, that

the bairn upon a time met the Queen of Elfland about the Linns o' Cleuch, and would not be holden back ; but ance wode, and ay waur—wad be aff to fairy land—for sic was her weird—and lap and flang like a rampant lion ; so that ten men could na hold her."

" I was one of the ten myself," said Fugal, gravely. " I had just then left his Majesty's light hô'se ; and can test it all for gospel truth."

" There was a meeting o' the Sourhole's session held," continued John Trann, " and a day o' fast and humiliation appointed, that He might be pleased to lift the right hand o' his wrath from the house of de Bruce, and the bairn over whom the Enemy had gotten power. And Mr. Gideon wrestled lang and sair—no to name a humbler Christian—inquiring into this controversy wi' the house o' de Bruce ; and got for answer, as I have heard, that it was that sinfu' rise on the penny-mail o' the Holm crafters, where I am tabernackling even now ; and that laying o' cess on the saumon waters, whilk, with the abundance thereof, had flowed free to a' mankind since the days o' the flood."

This, and such like, was all the information collected by Grahame, scarcely worth his stoups

of liquor ; and so long as the spigot flowed at his bidding, he saw that he might drain intelligence equally copious. But to return to the course of our narrative.

When Elizabeth had been studying for nearly two years, and had added to her stores of Biblical lore such vagrant blossoms of English literature as flourished in Mason's Collection, another revolution took place in her life.

Upon a sunshine holiday the phenomenon of a carriage appeared at the door of the Grahame Arms ; and the alarmed landlord received the rolling glory with as many bows as, fairly divided, might have been at least one to each spoke of the four wheels.

“ It will be the Lord de Bruce.”—No, it was the factor ; and along the straggling street heads were pushed out of every door in curiosity, and drawn back in habitual terror and reverence of the great name of Harletillum. It was, however, only the factor's lady, or more properly the Trustee's lady.

Mrs. John Hutchen of Harletillum, wife of the present trustee, and daughter of the former factor, was a garish and “ rather good-looking” woman—unquestionably a finely dressed one. She

sent for Elizabeth. In haste was the blooming face washed—in haste were the red Morocco sharp-toed slippers and the long green Persian sash put on, both the gift of Monkshaugh. The white mode tippet was pinned above the whiter cambric frock ; and with bashful glee, led by Monica Doran, whose agony of alarm she entirely overlooked, Elizabeth obeyed the summons.

Mrs. John Hutchen saluted the daughter of Lord de Bruce rather kindly, but took no notice whatever of the venerable person who attended her. She made the bashful girl take some wine ; and introduced her to Miss Juliana de Bruce Hutchen, a young lady about her own age, who gave her a sidelong, pouting, and scornful examination from head to heel—or rather from slipper to bonnet—which Elizabeth's bright and saucy eyes repaid with no lack of interest.

Elizabeth was then interrogated on her accomplishments, and found as woefully wanting as she had been at the memorable “ Diet of examen ” three years before. She hung her head abashed and awkward—all the brightness and flush of hope with which she had entered the room eclipsed. But it was expressly on gracious intent that Mrs. Hutchen had come ; so with her own thumbs she

pushed in the finely curved shoulders of Elizabeth, directed her how to point her toes,—as a climax of goodness summoned her own maid to see “how the dowdy creature could be fitted with decent stays,” and made her stand up to measure heights with Juliana.—All the blood of the de Bruces rushed to the temples of Elizabeth; all their pride raised the head and dilated the beautiful light figure, which soared rather than stood above that of Miss Juliana, in the natural grace inseparable from its perfect formation.

“Umph!—Mind your carriage, Miss Juliana; and you, Miss de Bruce, must be a good girl, and I shall send you a nice new stays, and a nice new governess to make you handsome and learn you every thing.” And thus the female part of the agency of the insane nobleman having discharged its duty by the ladies connected with “the property,” Mrs. Hutchen ascended her triumphal car, and drove off in state, the landlord’s head vibrating like a pendulum while the vehicle continued in sight.

Monica Doran all this while spoke not; but when she reached home she shed some tears, which the little girl affectionately kissed off, volun-

tarily promising never to love any governess half so well as her “ own Goody Doran.”

Mrs. John Hutchen, heaven-directed, was more lucky than wise in selecting a governess for the daughter of Lord de Bruce. In due time apartments were fitted up in the Tower, with comfort and even elegance, and furnished with every customary requisite for the mental or personal accomplishment of the pupil.

Three years again passed away, a period of application and discomfort, in which Elizabeth, strictly debarred from all intercourse with her nurse or the family of Monkshaugh, could do nothing better than profit by the instructions of her governess. This lady, of a character originally cold and formal, was by this time hackneyed in office ; and rendered callous, selfish, and calculating by the selfishness of her various employers. Her understanding of her duties was a fixed thing ; so many hours a day to Italian, music, and French, for so many guineas per annum, with a rigid and unyielding enforcement of that petty code of petty regulation for person, dress, demeanour, &c. instituted in the fashionable boarding-school where she had first been a half-boarder, and subsequently

a teacher. A civil greeting daily to all members of the family in which she might chance to be for the time, and a more ceremonious leave-taking at the termination of her engagement, with a fairly-penned letter of acknowledgment afterwards transmitted for all civilities received:—and thus she made her heartless rounds, biennial or triennial, with the character of “a safe discreet person in a family, and one whose accent was faultless.”

Elizabeth tried to love her governess, but the sentiment found nothing to feed upon; and in her warm and enthusiastic nature how little would have kept kindness alive! The governess interfered with her visits to her former friends; and then Elizabeth tried to hate her. But even this sentiment found no aliment in the cold, quiet, equable manners, thin lips, and lath-like figure of her instructress. For the last two years they went on better together. Elizabeth ceased to torment and mortify by wanton and mischievous pranks; and came to view her governess as a machine which gave her lessons very correctly, as she presumed, and diligently taught her the names of tools, the uses of which it was left to her own energies afterwards to direct and apply.

But again came another change. The gover-

ness was summoned away on one day's notice ; the plate, the hangings, the musical instruments followed ; and the lonely girl was once more consigned to her original solitude and destitution. She was, however, also restored to her original independence, with cultivated and enlarged capacities of thought and occupation.

The succeeding period was a happy interval in the life of Elizabeth ; and yet nothing occurred which a stranger could have noted as memorable. She had her needlework, her lonely rambles among the hills, and her social visits to the hamlet, the marvels of old Fugal, who was the Munchausen of the district, and the old songs and legends of Monica, in themselves a mine of enjoyment. She had lost her best musical instrument ; but she retained all her musical capacities. Music is said to be a social art—and in one sense it is so ; but there is music which is neither very social, nor at all under the dominion of art—a gift of nature, a passion, a feeling, solitary, heartfelt, the charmed soul hanging on the murmurs of the lip as the rose is fabled to listen to the song of the nightingale. Elizabeth's musical tastes, which made so much of the enjoyment of her solitary life, were of Rousseau's third order. Her soul was instinct with

melody—the murmurs of her infancy were musical, and the wild warbling of her dreams more touching than her most finished song. To her ear all nature was one mighty instrument, of a scale infinitely graduated but all attuned to harmony. To listen was to enjoy—from the hoarse breaking of the waves on the shore to the tinkle of the summer rill—from the burst and swell and long-rolling peal of the thunder cloud, to the faint winter churm of the red-breast. Thus, though the inexplicable order, or caprice of the family agent had somewhat abridged one source of enjoyment, it could not attain her hereditary and inde-feasible right to nature's gift. Her instruments were away ; but she could still, in the deep twilight of her chamber, listen, soothed or rapt, to those viewless harps of a thousand strings sounding in the leafless woods below. But those purely natural strains, the articulate breathings of passion and sensibility, speaking a universal language, be it in the glowing song of the Hindoo girl, or the wild lament of the highland maid,—and above all, the music “married to immortal verse,” claimed a loftier place in her musical associations, and ministered delight to a higher class of feelings. Thus if Elizabeth sometimes pined in thought she had

also very much to enjoy ; and even in these her most forlorn years, the scale of happiness fairly preponderated.

The departure of the governess restored her to the society of Monica, and of Monkshaugh, who now benevolently fancied, that her lengthened visits to himself must be of infinite use in polishing her manners and cheering her spirits. Even Effie Fechnie, won by the smile of arch and resistless sweetness which played round the lip of Elizabeth, came at last to forgive her old pranks, and to tolerate her occasional visits in a place where she admitted no female rival ; and saw, without jealousy, though not without reproof, the many idle hours now loitered away in the book-closet adjoining the family parlour, in the old tangled arbours of the garden, or in the dean wood, with the secreted volume.

A new and absorbing passion was now awakened in Elizabeth, by the treasures of this sanctuary of Monkshaugh's literature. That gentleman's own weekday reading was chiefly confined to the "Book of Common Prayer," the Almanack, and a System of Cookery, illustrated with plates and enriched by a treatise on carving. But the taste for polite letters had begun to revive in the fash-

ionable circles of the Scottish metropolis, just about the period that he had flourished as a beau, so that he still retained a gentlemanly acquaintance with the names of Shakspeare and Mr. Pope, and an intimate acquaintance with the popular tea-table miscellanies of the day, and with the elegant papers of the *Mirror* and *Lounger*. He knew also that young ladies, as a part of their education, ought to read the *Spectator* abridged, and *Clarissa Harlowe*, together with *Fordyce's Sermons*. He even sometimes vaunted to Elizabeth of having once seen the "Ayrshire ploughman" in Bailie Creech's shop, in his celebrated top-boots, buck-skin breeches, and buff waistcoat. The Laird, therefore, with such pretensions to literature in his own person, rather respected a moderate love of books as indicating "a gentle" nature; and, due charges being given of the bindings, allowed Elizabeth the unlimited range of his stores.

Little did the old beau dream that the long summer's day, and the longer winter's night, were to be spent by the young enthusiast in the sweet thralldom of pleasureable, if not profitable study, till her only life lay among the phantoms and creations of bookland—witching land!—that "with tendrils strong as flesh and blood" the heart and

fancy of the solitary girl were twining themselves around those shadowy substances. But had he been aware of this, Monkshaugh had an easy and infallible way of accounting for every extravagance in Elizabeth—the family malady—incipient madness—or, at least, “a touch” of the de Bruce family inheritance.

This new and powerful taste gradually withdrew Elizabeth from the few rural intimacies of her schooldays, and might soon have been carried to pernicious excess, had it not been counteracted by that “course of true love” which the generous and impetuous temper of Wolfe Grahame, and the idolizing affection of his mistress, compelled to run smoothly, in defiance of every obstruction, offered by chilling experience and grey-beard wisdom.

Till the return of Wolfe Grahame in the previous year, Elizabeth had met with no one being that could understand or sympathize with her peculiar feelings and new-born tastes; and they were therefore scrupulously confined to her own bosom. No creature could have looked more blithe of heart or fancy free, even when the fever of romance was running the highest.

The young people met, and with mutual plea-

sure renewed their early acquaintance ; but their talk was of any thing rather than books. There is however a free-masonry among the genuine, and therefore secret lovers of literature, by which, without a word exchanged, without one critical opinion delivered, they recognize each other. By those occult signs, Elizabeth soon discovered that Wolfe Grahame had drunk of the same enchanted fountain—that they had loved the same Juliet, wept the same “Gentle Ladye wedded to the Moor.” Grahame had now indeed entered on the rougher track of a man’s life, and, as he fancied, forever abandoned the “primrose path ;” yet in the idleness of that long and beautiful summer, it was with fresh delight that he returned to dream and dally in it with Elizabeth. But this calm and trustful life of careless delights could not long last. There rose “a dream within the dream,” and it speedily took substance and vitality ; so by the end of the season, what with the little aids of long rambles among the hills, originally prescribed for health and exercise by Monks-haugh, and continued for no reason distinctly rendered, glowing sun-sets fading into still sweeter gloamings, melancholy songs and mirthful conversations, frequent meetings, and, more dangerous

far, secret anticipations of meeting no more, the half conscious lovers had gradually and imperceptibly reached that dizzy verge on which the little finger of Cupid becomes as mighty as the right arm of a giant—from which retreat may still be possible, but where it is as certain that the enforcement of a feather—a breath—a word—an inarticulate murmur, may suddenly precipitate the hovering victim headlong and beyond recovery.

It was at this time that Wolfe, on a casual visit to Ernescraig, surprised his solitary companion in an agony of tears, reading, or attempting to read a letter, which she threw aside on his appearance, while she hastily strove to stifle every outward symptom of grief. The effect of a woman's tears on a man, not previously hardened by a long course of hysterics, is well understood—their effect on a devoted heart cannot be so well comprehended; for that must depend on what sort of heart the devoted one is. If warm, young, ingenuous, generous, as was Wolfe's, the heart would probably, in such circumstances, make short work with reflection. With him there was no place for graceful reserve—no pause for studied delicacy of address. The griefs of Elizabeth were his; and, before one intelligible word was uttered on either side, he had

folded her unresisting form to his bosom as its chosen place of refuge, and with his lip gathered up the tears which now fell in brighter, warmer showers, gushing over her cheeks as her heart heaved beneath his clasp.

“ How is this Elizabeth ? Tell me—*me*—your cousin—your friend—who would give life to make you happy—whose life can know no happiness but in your love ! ”

The blood which for an instant wholly deserted the cheeks of the bewildered girl, returned in the wildest tide. Her heart throbbed as if it would have burst its prison, and she trembled exceedingly. For another instant her head rested where it had involuntarily fallen ; and then modestly withdrawing herself from this strict embrace, she whispered—“ Oh ! Wolfe, I am certainly very foolish, perhaps very proud—but very, very miserable ; yet I thought not to have betrayed myself to you. But now I must, and I will tell you all.”

She put into his hands a letter written by order of Mr. Hutchen, stating, in no very delicate terms, that the trustee had received an advantageous offer from a friend, who wished to possess Ernescraig as a shooting residence, and hoped that

among the numerous family friends, Miss de Bruce would have no difficulty in fixing herself properly.

“Do not think me so pitiful, so abject, so base in spirit, as to have shed even one tear for all that this man could either threaten or do. But this—this”—she pointed to yet another letter, in which Grahame recognised the strong, rigid, angular, old-court characters of the Lady Tamtallan, the aunt of Lord de Bruce, the Minerva of Monks-haugh’s imagination.

“This—this”—Elizabeth could not reveal to any human ear the stirrings of a young and proud spirit, wounded, insulted, crushed in its tenderest feelings—the memory of her mother—the wretchedness of her father!—but she suffered herself to be yet again clasped to the one generous heart which beat for her—only for her—yearned over her—worshipped her—and there she wept it all. In this manner had the signal been given, the veil dropped that for months had concealed feelings which Grahame would not, and Elizabeth durst not ascertain. And now—

—
“Eternity was in their lips and eyes,
Bliss in their brows’ bend.”

“O, never mind my poor uncle’s objections,”

said Grahame. "Let us be content to love him as well as we can because he is our uncle ; for I fear, Elizabeth, neither your taste nor my reason will ever be able to find a better because. It will delight him to hear of our marriage after it is all over ; but to put him to the trouble of thinking about it—what with jewels and ginger-cake, settlements and bride favours, it would unquestionably turn his head."

Wolfe Grahame had known from his boyhood the nervous horror entertained by his uncle of the fatal malady incident to the family of de Bruce, vain as he was of the relationship. He also knew the firmness of Monkshaugh's belief in the curse that clung to that devoted house. There was likewise some mystery—some cloud about the birth of Elizabeth which no one could comprehend. Mr. Hutchen, her guardian, had, it was understood, been strictly prohibited from ever permitting her to leave the Tower of Ernescraig ; but this indeed Monkshaugh imputed to his own ill-natured cupidity. Monkshaugh had yet another objection. The Lady Tamtallan, who had wished to ally her nephew, Lord de Bruce, to a daughter of her own, never could endure to hear the name of Elizabeth, whom she loathed unseen, both as a girl, and as

the daughter of an Irish “foreigner” who had usurped the place of her own child.—“And she was,” Monkshaugh said, as the Whittret well knew, “a woman of a strong mind, with ten thousand pounds at her own disposal, forbye linen, plate, and the rose-diamond buckle—no nearer male connexion than Wolfe Grahame, except grand-daughters,—abhorred all lassies, and had shown a special favour for Wolfe till when a callant he had stood in his own light by trampling on the tail of *Black Agnes*, and devouring, stoup and roup, a brace of Poor Knights of Windsor, expressly cooked for her ladyship’s Saturday night’s supper.—She pretended to laugh at that loss,” added Monkshaugh; “but it is weel kenned she likes her supper. She clouted him for Black Agnes’s mishap; and the graceless imp cuffed her again. She pretended to laugh at that too—for she is a woman of an uncommon strong mind.”

“I have heard she’s a dour busteous carlin,” said Frisel, “threw her ebony stick at Lord——sitting in his very place o’ judgment, when he ga’e the plea against her.”

“Is it Lady Tamtallan ye name a busteous carlin, sirrah?”

“Carlin, or Gyre-carlin, if she want to keep

Wolfe Grahame frac marrying 'Lisbeth de Bruce, she need to cast her green een about her," muttered the Whittret.

Wolfe, it must be owned, had the utmost contempt for those visions of succession to the rose-diamond buckle, which were so much to Monkshaugh. He had already with facile kindness which his judgment condemned, guaranteed obligations incurred by the weakness, the obstinacy, and the vanity of his uncle, which he was aware must keep him a poor man for many a year, even were the succession open to him to-morrow ; and he conceived that he possessed the full right of following his own judgment, and consulting his own feelings in the dearest interest of his life. The very circumstances that might have damped the ardour of a more prudent lover, increased the tenderness of Grahame. Elizabeth—to him the most winning and delightful of human beings—stood alone—his own—only—all his own—detached by singular fortune from all human relationship, and liable, he shuddered to believe, to the most fearful of human maladies, from which his care, his tenderness, his love, were henceforth to be her shield.

There was on every hand an understanding that Elizabeth's birth was coeval with the period

of her father's derangement, and with the burning of Cambuskenneth Lodge. Of her mother little was known to their few distant relations ; and had it not been for the scroll conveyed to him about this time, notwithstanding the many tokens of a mother's care which Elizabeth found, or fancied in the history of the first fifteen years of her life—valuable and elegant gifts transmitted, no one knew how, to old Monica Doran—Grahame must still have believed that the victim of that memorable night was the mother of his mistress. Again and again did he examine Mr. Haliburton. That faithful depositary of the secret of the dying midwife resisted all attempts to betray the trust—if such it was—with the fidelity of a father confessor ; but he agreed to search for the daughter of the woman, and if her consent were gained his scruples would give way.

Many other circumstances made a temporary concealment of the union, which Grahame eloquently urged, expedient at this time. Without any overweening conceit, either of his own person, or his various attributes as soldier, gentleman, and presumptive heir, Wolfe could not fail to perceive, in the course of the business arrangements which his uncle's affairs compelled him to have with

Hutchen, that in that gentlemen he might hope to find a willing and generous father-in-law, who, if deprived of the chance of becoming such, might be equally ready to visit upon the uncle the indifference shown by the nephew for so desirable an alliance. He wished also to clear up, if possible, the mystery of Elizabeth's birth, before he presented her to the world as his. But paramount to all was the passionate wish to make her his—to give to his own existence an invaluable blessing, an unfading charm, while to her he gave home, an ascertained place in life, and, dearer still, boundless unimaginable felicity—did she not look as if thus it were?—in the possession of his affection.

The absence of Monica Doran, at this time on one of her mysterious periodical journeys, was much regretted by Elizabeth. Still she was happy. She had found, and for the first time of her life—

“ One bosom to reelize upon,
One heart to be her only one ;
And 'twas enough for love.”

Elizabeth's marriage was celebrated in Ernes-craig, her humble friends there, whose secrecy was easily purchased, being the only witnesses to the ceremony. And for a few short months this “paradise of hearts” was undisturbed ; till the Irish rebellion

brought a hasty summons to many a soldier—and among others to Wolfe Grahame. It was now that Elizabeth was first awakened to the real ills of her condition ; for if she had ever before entertained any passing doubts as to the propriety of her marriage, they were all hushed in its felicity.

But now she was alone, with new cares, new anxieties. Yet the source of these was also the fountain of all her past happiness, of all her future hopes. She had something to love with affection so supreme compared with all she had ever felt before, that the sentiment alone seemed enough for happiness.

From the period of her marriage Elizabeth had not once visited Monkshaugh. In every place, save the Tower of Ernescraig and the solitudes around it, she felt embarrassment and disquiet ; and in every society, save his who made her world, something was sure to occur, which her conscious heart and quick feelings applied as reproach or suspicion.

But Grahame had entreated her to accept of the often repeated invitation of his uncle, at least as soon as he should himself be gone ; and those only who have loved like Elizabeth, can understand the many sources of interest and delight which a

residence under this roof promised to her at this time. In her lonely home, to her own heart only could she whisper the name which was here a household word. Here Wolfe was the engrossing object of the whole family. Every chance visitor talked of him. Those who had met with him or heard of him, called to give the acceptable intelligence. Yet there was pain as well as pleasure in this; for who could understand—who talk of him to satisfy Elizabeth !

When a few days passed the first embarrassments of her visit were over, and again she mingled in the current of domestic life in Monkshaugh, and, advancing every hour in favour with its master, the fresh and buoyant spirit of Elizabeth rose to its natural level. Wolfe might obtain advancement, or something might occur to restore her to his society,—and what more was wanted to make her happiness complete! These hopes of air a breath would puff away. If Elizabeth had been rash in her marriage she was soon doomed to expiate that offence almost every hour of the day,—for Monkshaugh, in the natural vanity of his heart, omitted no opportunity of boasting of the splendid and wealthy alliances which “her cousin,” with his many advantages of talent, person, and family,

might form, whenever he liked to *give himself the trouble of choice*.

On the second evening of her visit, the Whittret returned with the horse which his young master had rode as far as ——— on his way to Ireland ; and as this paragon of serving-men was blest with a free copious elocution, and conversational tact which went far to establish his claim to a highland descent, the long evening was spent in listening to the narrative of the first day's journey. There were, indeed, many episodes interwoven, fully as interesting to Monkshaugh as was the main story to Elizabeth. Towards the close of this rambling narrative, the Whittret contrived to give her a private signal of intelligence ; and though her brow reddened with proud shame, love conquered the feeling, and she retired to the book-closet adjoining the parlour, and from thence passed into the garden by a sashed door, to favour the moonlight audience demanded.

CHAPTER VI.

FAMILY GOSSIP.

“I pr’ythee take the cork out of thy mouth, that I may hear thy tidings.”

As You Like It.

“Is there not milking-time when you are going to bed, or kiln-hole to whistle off these secrets, but you must be tittle-tattling before all our guests.”

Winter’s Tale.

THE old-fashioned garden of Monkshaugh was a favourite haunt of Elizabeth’s. It lay immediately behind the mansion, divided from the river by a few acres half orchard half home-field, and sheltered by double rows of embowering elms. Garden enclosure there was none, though here a few yards of glossy holly hedge, and there a detachment of mossy pales interlaced with fresh sprays of the white thorn, and again grassy banks crowned with furze, and all glittering with buttercups and daisies, showed that something of the

kind might once have been contemplated. But now this secluded garden was open to every wandering wind of heaven, and every vagrant foot of truant school-boy. Beds of chamomile, plats of rue and rosemary, and other herbs of grace, were carelessly mixed with tangled rose-trees and fruit bushes. Dainty plants and common pot-herbs flourished together in amity, with some attention to neatness, but none to order or classification; and a lively runlet, stolen from the dean burn, danced and glided along the margin of the turfen walks, giving life, spirit and freshness to the whole scene. Yet the general effect of the half-neglected spot was pleasing; and none felt that desire to overleap the straggling enclosures which is so apt to beset one cribbed in the durance of a modern brick-walled garden.

Elizabeth made the tour of this garden once and again, extended her walk to the Ducot park, and the Foal's park, two small enclosures that flanked the mansion and garden on the right and left, but still her squire appeared not. She returned to the "library," as the book closet was termed. Near its sashed door, concealed by a tall white rose-tree, was the trellissed window of a pantry or store place, one of the many low *out-shots*

stuck round the mansion ; and in this place was heard the voice of the Whittret, opening his budget afresh for the solace and edification of Mistress Euphan Fechnie, as she creamed her milk cogs. These worthies and inseparables liked each other, in Frisel's phrase, "as cats like mustard ;" but they were nevertheless entirely agreed in one point: Euphan had an inordinate desire to change her state, and Frisel a wish equally ardent—"to make the toun quit o' her."

"Ye'll be for offering me some refreshment, Effie, when I stow away my pack. Guess ye if I need it no after my day's trail: There were first the Laird's letter to Clerk Gled, anent the Harletillum plea, and the draught on the British Linen ; for the whilk I got fient a boddle. Keep your thumb on that Effie,—and look about ye, lass."

"It's a gone house—a sinking house !—If that hare-brained lad dinna tak rule and prop the auld wa's the pride o' Monkshaugh has gotten a whomle. Miss July Annie Hurcheon has a lippie o' red gowd for tocher-gude they say.—Is that true, Francie,—you that kens a' thing?"

"That will ne'er be a match," replied Francie, winking and nodding his head oracularly.—"Say ye I said it, Effie."

“Mighty Goliath o’ Gath! and ye are amang the sma’ prophets!”

“I ken what I ken.”

“Ye ken that Wolfe Grahame is a proud-stomached headstrong fule, wha will sit in his ain light till he find the frost o’t.”

“Whilk shows he’ll fill his father’s belt, and may be gi’e it a rax. Aye! there was the man o’ mettle,—wi’ mair o’ the cock-burd in his little finger than our Pernickitic Laird has in his haill bouk!—But get me free o’ this gear Effie. I’m the common pack-horse o’ the country side.—What’s to come owre ye a’ when I gi’e up business?—There’s first a half-stand o’ wires for Mrs. Doran. I can look for sma’ propine for doing her errands—besides she’s to the bent again; but she has the will, honest woman.—And here’s five bawbies’ worth o’ pig-tail for auld Ba’whirley. He’ll ha’e nae change as usual, but routh o’ cheek wind.—And this i’ the bit paper is a pennyworth o’ arinetty litt, for the auld gudewife o’ Hungeremout, to dye the young Laird’s breeks ’ankeen ere he gangs a wooing Jock Hurcheon’s maiden.”

“To dye the butter I jalouse!” grinned Effie, who had a deadly rivalry both in love and dairy produce, with this frugal matron of Hungeremout.

“O! de’il a doubt,” replied Frisel, still unloading his stores. “An ee to Mr. Gideon, said ye? He’ll never look the gate she sits. Think ye, Effie, what she offered me last week when I trailed her hame some sosserie o’ treacle, to make plash o’ sma’ drink for the servants,—it gaed against the stomach o’ my conscience to be the bearer—a dainty luggie fu’ o’ plotted whey! I could ha’e thrown it in the she-Nabal’s face. How does she think man’s nature is to be supported on jaups like that!”

“But ye took it though, Francie.”

“I took it no to affront the house o’ Hungerem-out—far-aff friends o’ our ain. The young gude-man pays weel when he has siller. I canna compleen.—And the Misses:—I ha’e brought them four nouvelles, and three bend-boxes; aye left in the barn till night-fa’, for fear o’ the gleg grey een o’ the auld leddy;—and care come on them they write sic a scart that ‘Twalmo Touchtlicbit, the book-man in Rookston, can mak’ neither tap, tail, nor mane o’t. However I made him gi’e me something about a castle and a ghaist; and that will keep the lasses greeting till my next raik to the burrows-toun. They scrapit up a groat amang them, poor

dears,—maggd frae their Sabbath pennies to the brod, I'm thinking."

And thus proceeded the Whittret, still as Elizabeth supposed searching for the contents of his valise, till he at last said abruptly, "And this—Ou, this is just naething ava, Effie."

"Ay, but it is just something ava, Francie! and a bonny like something for ane eating the bread, and wearing the livery coat o' the Laird o' Monkshaugh to ha'e about him! Packing cards wi' Harletillum, and connceiving and colloquing to encourage a headstrong lad—with whom ye are hand and glove again—in what ye ken will lead to his rank ruin! and I ha'e naething to say again' the lassie, but that she may gang wode the night afore the morn, like her puir daft father, and is no worth a plack-a-bawbie, had she the wisdom o' Solomon and Sheba. Ye ken weel—nane better—that sic a match wad loose Harletillum on our Laird, to rend and spuizie our grund; for it's been lang thought he has an ee to Captain Wolfe for his Flanders-baby o' a maiden; and tholes wi' us, and gi'es us the lang day allenarly for this. But the Laird is as blind as a beetle, and as proud as a Brissel cock."

With great indignation did Frisel throw back the charge of confederating with Harletillum ; but that he was the bearer of private despatches from Captain Wolfe to Elizabeth, was he feared now undeniable.

“ Ye see what it is to be a scholar, and to read hand-o’-writ, Effie.—Conscience ! but it’s a gleg ee too that *single* ane. But I ken one thing—this maiden is a dear darling to Mr. Gideon. They need expect little grace from him that show nane to Leddy ’Lizbeth. And, Effie, rest ye merry, woman. I’ll lay my spleuchan to your milsey clout, that ye’ll be married afore her yet, if ye drive quiet and canny. Come ! let us see how handsomely ye’ll supper me after my lang trail : a white puddin’—nane spices them better in the parish,—a reisted haddock, or some sic confection. I trow I expounded a piece o’ doctrine to a certain person on the Coalheugh muir the other day. ‘ What better,’ as I said, ‘ were we wi’ reformed ministers than wi’ Papish priests, if they were to rin loose about a country-side, and no tak wives ? ’ ”

“ Ye’re a flecchin fair-fashioned loonie,” said the maiden, grimly smiling and shaking her head. “ But it is neither my wish nor will to breed dispeace between man and master ;—though I could

ill fill the place o' the worthy gudewife o' Sour-holes, now—praised be the Lord for all things!—in Abraham's bosom."

"Weel—behave, Effie, and ye may soon be in as gude a fallow's. Keep counsel woman:—

"Cheer up your heart my *bony* lass,
"There's gear to win ye never saw"—

sang the Whittret in affected glee.

"Na, the gudewives o' the congregation thought her but a doin'less boddie, to make so short outcome o' a stipend o' thirty English pounds—there's a soom!—forbye an allowance for communion yelements o' as many shillings sterling!—no our scrimpit Scots money, Francie."

While visions of conjugal splendour and felicity sparkled before Effie's grey eye, and dimly floated before her white one, Frisel expressed cordial sympathy.—"Weel, lass! he'll fa' on his feet at last—thanks to his weel-wishers! So get us something comfortable—d'ye mark me?—and say nae mair. Gosh, Effie, how caidgie he'll look!" And seizing the dun maiden by both hands he dragged her round the floor, and capered round her like a monkey setting to a bear, singing aloud—

'The carle he came owre the craft,
'Wi' his beard new shaven ;
He looked and lap as he'd been daft ;
'The carle trows that I wad ha'e him'---

till he fairly swung her into the kitchen, and taking the liberty to turn the key outside, speeded round into the garden. There stood Elizabeth, pale and agitated, rooted to the spot where she had overheard the above gratifying dialogue.

"My father! my father!" was her agonizing thought. "This malady of our blood! This dreadful visitation! Is our calamity then a common speech—a cause of alarm, horror and exclusion, a gulph that divides us from all hope? And have I then rashly plunged into it—and dragged into its abyss—*him*?"—She buried her face in her hands in utter agony; and the letters for which she had so earnestly longed, and which at another season would have filled her bosom with transport, were received with an unnatural deadness of heart, such as she had never before experienced.

The trusty messenger presented his despatches with as much outward shew of respect as was at all compatible with his familiar habits; and expressed his entire devotion to her service with zeal that atoned for his late indiscretion. On that topic he observed a prudent silence, merely saying—

“ ‘This is frae a friend, Lady ‘Lizabeth, who counselled me to say, that in ony strait or dilemmy I was as trusty a hand at a message as e’er a *he* throughout the bounds o’ braid Scotland—by night or by day—wi’ a spice o’ contrivance at a pinch that is no the gift o’ ilka auld trooper. A nod or a wink will bring me to your leddyship’s whistle, be I at kirk or fair, mill or smiddy:—I’m aye gaun about like the ill bawbie, and will come to your leddyship’s hand at ony time, like the bowl o’ a pint stoup.”

With a scrape of one foot, and a shuffle of both, the Whittret withdrew to release his prisoner.

This letter was of costly postage.—Elizabeth paid it with both tears and blushes ; but now, sealed with “ a double kiss,” it was placed in her bosom that she might read it in the silence and solitude of her own chamber. And never had the tedious inanity and pribble-prabble of the Laird appeared so tiresome as on this night. From the brood goose to the Lady Tamtallan—from his “ ever honoured mother’s” recipe for “ white quality cakes,” to “ certain clauses of the entail,” his mind wandered through all its favourite regions of thought ; and a farewell buzz was in Elizabeth’s ears about new fringing the yellow Turk-upon-

Turk bed before Wolfe returned, and new dipping the pink lining of the toilet-table cover in the "guests' chamber," about which she came under some promise, which could scarcely be binding on her conscience, so totally absent was her mind.

CHAPTER VII.

HOPES AND ANXIETIES.

The hour is come, the cherished hour,
When from the busy world set free,
I seek again my lonely bower,
And muse in silent thought on thee.
And Oh ! how sweet to know that still,
Though severed from thee widely far,
Our hearts the self-same thought may fill,
Our eyes yet seek the self-same star.

Song.

THE weariest day has its close.—At last Elizabeth was enabled to lock, and double lock her door, and enjoy undisturbed the throbbing delight of a first hasty perusal of her letter ; and then in more luxurious leisure every fond nothing, every phrase of endearment, every tender expression was dwelt upon and scanned. And last of all, with what flutter and softness of heart were her first attempts made to reply to this effusion of affection.

* * * * *

“Could you guess,” she said, among many other desultory things, “how cordial and soothing to me is this single little letter, you would not miss every day to tell me how it fared with you, and that you still held in remembrance the forlorn one whose yearning heart clings around you in tenderness, deeper, though more sorrowful, than ever blest the most rapturous moments of our past intercourse. How often, while by your side, have I fancied it impossible that the blest and enviable creature whom you loved, and who durst call you hers, could ever know the touch of sorrow! I am not sorrowful, dearest Wolfe, still less complaining; yet I feel that every day takes you farther from me, that every day is a day almost lost to affection, which time can never repay to us, that every passing hour increases that anxiety inexplicably interwoven with our fondest hopes—sent perhaps to temper and chastise them. Is it so? There is a fearful mystery, from which my coward spirit ever shrinks, in what good people tell us of the permitted degree of human attachments—as if it were sin to love as I do—with the unreserved, entire, warm surrender of the whole burning heart—with the devotion of the whole spirit. If it be not idolatry—and I will not think so—it is at

times I fear nearly allied to misery ; and yet how unspeakably sweet is it to me to have you thus my *own*, to care about, and even to weep for.

“ But I must now give you news of me. I have obeyed your wishes. I am in Monkshaugh, under your own roof, the tenant of the little arched room over the hall, on which, when it was yours, I have so often gazed through tears. Do you remember the feverish attack which you had in the last spring?—but you never do remember any thing about yourself half so well as I do—when I used to wander all day long in the Pechs’ Path, that, by the opening and closing of the curtains, I might judge how it fared with him whom I durst not approach, while my agonizing thoughts hovered round his bed-side continually. Oh ! when will the time come that I may hold up my head in any presence, and look as if I loved you ! Will it ever come ? Now that you are far away, every unmeaning look—every chance-dropt word overwhelms me.

“ You remind me of our old fond disputes about the different characters of man’s and woman’s love. My idle reveries often wander into the old track ;

and I wish you here, were it only to make me false to my old faith in woman's purer, deeper, fonder love—her unhesitating, uncalculating, passionate affection, which surrenders the whole being, and finds in its object a dearer and nobler existence—the love of Imogen and Juliet, of Miranda and Desdemona—in another degree, but yet as truly woman's, the love of la Valiere, *l'humble violette*—of the Heloise of Abelard, and even of the mistress of Macheath—poor Polly Peachum. But I strive to believe you; and shall not quarrel with either your faith or practice while you still continue, as to-night, to tell me, that wherever a man's various fortune may call you to struggle or endure, whatever of prosperity ambitious daring may bring you, that it is here—only here—to Ernescraig—to the bosom all your own, you can ever turn for happiness. Could we not find it now—this good old friend conciliated—here—living together in safe obscurity, and what the false world calls poverty—a world to each other—you at least a universe to me?”

How would godly Gideon have groaned over this “idolatrous” trifling of his favourite Elizabeth! But how dear—how soothing to her was the privilege of this happy trifling, from which she could scarcely

break off to repeat the long, lingering, melting farewell, so hard to be said to the beloved even in writing. Before this final, and to her painful ceremony, she took a tranquillizing walk across the chamber, and opened the window shutters upon a still, sweet morning, unclosing its dewy lids as softly as an infant waked by a mother's kiss—"creeping on with stealthy pace—not as it wont to come," wrote Elizabeth, "flushed with haste, tearing you from me in our past happy days yonder in our own valley. Will they ever—ever come again? And do you still keep the promise made to me there—so often renewed from mere delight in its repetition—to give to your God and to me the last remembrance of your waking hours—the first fresh feeling of the returning morning—one little minute snatched from the turmoil of vulgar hours, consecrated to our fond recollections, and our yet fonder hopes—mingling in one sentiment faith, and homage, and love. Are you awake yet, love? Are you thus engaged now? How I trifle with you! and with what a gush of overwhelming tenderness do I now again say—God bless you! my own and ever dearest —

“Good night—Good night!”

And poor Elizabeth soon found more substantial reason for indulging in those womanly or lover-like apprehensions, which are ever inseparable from a high and imaginative tone of passion ; for who ever loved as she loved without experiencing intense and, perhaps, foolish anxiety, about the strength of the sentiment which they inspire !

True to her own feelings, nightly did affection repeat its orisons, and melancholy enough they at last became. From Ayr Elizabeth got another letter, and yet another from Carrickfergus, at which garrison, instead of keeping the regular ferry, vessels at that disturbed period were compelled to land. Monkshaugh received, even after this, one brief epistle from his young kinsman, who merely mentioned that he had had some singular adventures on his journey to Dublin, but was now with his regiment. This last very brief letter Elizabeth contrived to secret for a night. She had indeed read it, and heard it read three times before ; but it might contain some expression, some allusion, some trace which ingenious affection, willing to be deceived, might construe into a reference to herself. Not one was found.

“ Ungenerous and cruel ! ” she exclaimed, throwing down the letter, while floods of burning tears

burst forth. “Common humanity—gentlemanly feeling, might have spared me torture like this. It is thus I expiate my folly.—Forgotten already!” Elizabeth was now to feel the ineffable bitterness of that moment when the withering heart first fears that the human hope on which it has reposed, in joy and trust, may be but a dream, and a mockery. But these vagrant surmises, so mortifying to the pride of her sex, so wounding to the tenderness of her affection, were as indignantly dismissed. The letters already received were again and again perused, every proof of recollected love was dwelt on, clung to now with fond tenacity; and confidence and spirit would revive together, again to waver, flag, and sink into yet deeper despondency. Bitterly then would she reproach herself for what was past, sometimes feeling in her humiliation as if she were unworthy the affection she claimed—as if she almost grudged it to herself. At these seasons of cruel depression, that enthusiastic tone of passion which ever sees in the beloved being “a bright peculiar star” to be admired and worshipped, led her to wonder, while she grieved, that she could have been so blinded as to believe that one so desolate, so unregarded as she was, could become the object of a permanent attachment to him whose

lot and whose deservings lay so far beyond hers. Could she then, had it still been possible, have surrendered her hopes and claims? Elizabeth could not so deceive herself. In the midst of anxiety, regret, and anguish, there was exulting pride, and thrilling delight in the consciousness that she was *his*—while his protracted silence gave her reason to fear that already he repented having made her so—that rash as was the deed it was done past recall, and that in her bosom duty and affection were henceforth united for ever.

Another week passed, an age of suspense and agony. Not even Monkshaugh received any letter; and marvelling and indignant at his cool indifference, she who durst at other times scarce whisper the name of Wolfe Grahame, gained courage to notice the circumstance as they sat together in the twilight. Monkshaugh took the matter so quietly as only to irritate her anxiety. And now to watch the return of the servant from the post-office, the throb and flutter of fevered expectation giving way to distracting doubts or sickening despondency, or to peruse at midnight the weekly newspaper which arrived at Monkshaugh, her heart throbbing with wild alarm, her blood curdling with apprehension as often as her quick-eye

caught the word *Ireland*, was become the daily life of the once happy Elizabeth. Privileged grief, with its pains, has its pomps and indulgences; how much more bitter may be the stifled agony which passes unmarked over that spirit to which complaining is denied, by which complaining is disdained—the cold curdling anguish which gathers around the desolate breaking heart. The deepest griefs of the drama of life were never wept aloud—never known to exist. Elizabeth hoped that her distress might pass unnoticed. The energy or the pride of her spirit nerved her to bear up nobly, when the cold or curious eye of the petty neighbouring world was upon her; for though averse to society no one, to a superficial observer, seemed more gay when engaged in its amusements; and, at all times externally serene, she went about the ordinary details of life, feeling that she awaited her fate.

As a petty aggravation of her own personal uneasiness, she was now made the confidant of all Monkshaugh's distresses, angers, and hopes. Wolfe Grahame would willingly have taken such measures as might have enabled his uncle at once to extricate himself from the toils of Hutchen; but the Laird, with the natural feeling of an amia-

ble, though perhaps weak mind, could not endure the idea of selling one rood of his family inheritance. It was like the dismemberment of a limb. When Elizabeth looked grave and anxious as he talked of his embarrassments, he would cheer her with such scraps of comfort as the following:—

“Never mind, cousin 'Lizabeth,—yon soldier lad may get haud o' some lass wi' as much gold sewed to her coat-tail as will free us o' Jock Hurcheon's bonds, without the bonnie holms o' Monks-haugh (and he looked with pride from the parlour window) going to John's Coffee-house—at least in my day.”

Spite of her better understanding, and her unshaken confidence in the honour and integrity of her lover, cooled though his affection might become, these little speeches would momentarily wring the heart of Elizabeth, upheld though she was by the generous consciousness of worth—self-existent—dependent of all outward shews and circumstances, which, had they been thrown together on some desert island of the ocean, or in the first ages of the world, would have made her, all destitute of friends and fortune as she now stood, a fit mate even for *him*. If his inexplicable silence forced her to doubt that his heart was forgetful, her faith

in the nobility of his nature never once wavered. She was spared the pang, to a generous mind more bitter than death, of having lavished her whole heart on one who could be base as well as wayward, sordid as well as fickle. It was not in this view that Elizabeth ever once imagined cause of regret in her secret ties. "I have given him all that woman can bestow," was her proud thought,— "all that affection looks for—faith, truth, and love—love how unbounded—how idolizing—how exclusive—how *sinful* perhaps in its wild excess!" And thus along with Monkshaugh's irksome prattle, and vague hopes of rich alliances, came old Gideon's theories, and stern denunciation—"Cursed is man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his armour"—sounding to her heart like the death-watch in the ear of superstition.

Elizabeth had rested a lingering hope on the return of Mr. Haliburton. But that reverend person came back to his grumbling flock as ignorant of the late movements of Wolfe Grahame as even the inmates of Monkshaugh. His mission, so far as regarded the mystery connected with Elizabeth's infancy, had been a complete failure. No trace could be obtained of the daughter of his old landlady, Mrs. Metcalf the midwife.

Gideon's return was announced on a Saturday morning by Frisel; and when the day passed and he came not, with the restlessness inseparable from the unhappy, Elizabeth, though she could not visit his cottage, wandered forth in the hope of perhaps somewhere "meeting the minister." The Laird who always imagined that he had a double portion of household duty to perform on Saturdays, was deeply engaged in pantry-business with Effie, and never missed her. She stole through the now melancholy garden and orchard down to the river.

The spirit of the year had waned like the hopes of Elizabeth. The scar tinge of autumn was on the woods—the hoarse voice of autumn was in the streams—the pale cold sun no longer drank up the dews, which hung all day on the blade, like the icy moisture in a dead man's eye—red leaves were swirling in eddies from the path down into the brown river; and the brilliant, the overpowering chorus of the summer birds was hushed into one broken feeble wail—the low sobbing moan of expiring nature. It was a chill, grey day, the dull sky sympathizing with the saddened earth. But to Elizabeth even the rigour of the blast was welcome. Its wing seemed to ruffle that

leadens dullness—that heavy stagnation of spirit which was creeping over her, from the constraint perpetually imposed upon her feelings, as the freshening breeze is said to relieve the mariner from the distempered visions produced by a dead calm.

There never yet, however, was a day in which the genuine lover of nature, if once fairly driven into her bosom, could not perceive something to waken his sympathies. Elizabeth, her frame braced, and her spirits rising with exercise, held on her way to those upland moors across the fords, where she had last seen Wolfe Grahame, almost certain that in a distant horseman she discovered Mr. Gideon mounted on the renowned Jenny Geddes. “Surely he can tell me something,” said she; and in the strength of this hope she began to feel somewhat of her wonted enjoyment in marking every surrounding object of natural beauty. The clusters of coral berries glittering in the holly bushes—the mosses more vividly green in winter than when the hot sun looks upon their beauty—the sweet churm of that little favourite bird “which ever in the haunch of winter sings,”—the lone whistle of the grey plover on the distant moors—all brought a sober, chastened delight, as she strolled onward.

From the hamlet of Castleburn, a deep scooped path called the "Cadger's Loan," led to the fords of Oran, so often mentioned in this story. It was one of the many *how roads* which abounded in Scotland at that period, formed on the very reverse of Macadam's plan, and as abhorrent to the owners of post-horses as delightful to the tasteful pedestrian. In winter those steep hollow paths or trenches resembled more the channel of a stream than a regular road. In fact this *how road* was the channel of innumerable tiny rills, which streaming over high incumbent banks of mingled rock and verdure, trickled softly away over mosses, plants, and pebbles, wandering, and turning, and twisting at will, though here and there, where they threatened to take the passenger fairly over the shoes in their clear waters, a few stepping stones had been strewed about, which diverted rather than impeded the course of the brooklets.

Elizabeth was making her way bounding over these stones, when a young gentleman on horseback, followed by a servant also mounted, and several sporting dogs, dashed so suddenly upon the path that had he not dexterously reined in his horse she must have been exposed to alarm, if not to actual danger, from the encounter.

While he drew up at one side to permit the lady to pass, the hounds recognized an old friend, and with one accord sprung upon Elizabeth with clamorous joy and obstreperous caresses. The long green cloak in which she was wrapped was in a second pulled from her shoulders; and there she stood "red as rose," with a gentle hand smilingly beating down these importunate admirers, and with a voice as gentle chiding them off. In one instant the stranger was at her side; and his servant also dismounted, and at the expense of some blows and cuffs restored order.

"Don't hurt them"—cried Elizabeth.

"Don't *kick* the dogs, sir"—cried the stranger to his active groom, though he as actively interfered with his hand to restore order as the servant did.

Elizabeth was pleased with this little trait. It was humanity—it was true good-breeding. She looked up and saw a young man of very pleasing person, fashionably attired, and with a decided air of fashion and refinement, who made many apologies for his dogs while he assisted her in recovering her cloak. The offenders meanwhile whined and slunk into the rear; all save one—old Dermid maintained his post at Elizabeth's knee.

“ I perceive,” said the young man, “ that Mr. Hutchen’s dogs, more fortunate than his guests, are entitled to claim the privilege of old acquaintance.”

“ We have met before,” said she. “ Poor old Dermid—’tis hard that *I* should reject your kindness ;” and caressing the old hound for an instant, while he arched his neck as if proudly conscious that fair hands and “ bright eyes were upon him ;” she bowed slightly to the stranger and passed on.

The gentleman begged that he or his servant might be allowed to carry home the wet cloak, which she had thrown down on the bank ; but she declined the service, saying that it would lie quite safely till she sent for it. He bowed and slowly mounted his horse, looked back and bowed again ; and the high banks intervened.

About this same hour the Whittret from kindness, alloyed it might be by some mixture of curiosity, and a distant vision of one of Elizabeth’s “ splendid shillings,” had set forth to the hamlet of Sourholes, to glean from the presiding apostle of that place crumbs of comfort, which might well merit the reward of perhaps a half-crown.

On the late journey Wolfe Grahame, by concert with Elizabeth, had acquainted Mr. Halibur-

ton with the position in which they stood ; and though the honest man groaned fearfully over their rashness, and more deeply still over the enormity of their passionate attachment, his feelings were greatly interested in whatever might befall Elizabeth. His previous knowledge prepared him for Frisel's address, who, after the first greetings, said—

“ If ye have not gude tidings o' Captain Wolfe, I'll flee the country. Flesh and blude cannot thole the white lips and sunken een o' that gentle leddy—and nac soul to make her moan to but mysel' about our toun.—If she wad but gi'e hersel' the comfort of speaking out to me.”

Gideon in silence doffed his extraordinary indoor costume, in which he looked, Frisel said, like the giant of all potato-bogles ; and, newshod and wigged, wended forth to comfort Elizabeth.

“ I thought to ha'e put aff this visit till the Sabbath's darg was owre ; but, Francie, we are tauld not to let the sun go down upon our wrath—we should not let it go down on our love either ; for oh ! my wee man, how soon do thoughts o' kindness cool in human hearts !”

“ Then ye'll be for hitting wi' Effie while the

iron's het," said Frisel, with a waggish leer upwards as he bounded on, making two steps and a skip for every huge stride of Gideon's. "Blithe will she be to see you this same night."

"Haud your peace, ye fule scoffer. But as I'm a livin' sinner, there's 'Lizbeth de Bruce coming down the Cadger's Loan! What young birkie is yon, Francie?"

"Mr. Delancy, a grand gentleman come to the *Whim* to marry Miss July Annie Hurcheon," was the reply.

Long and cordial, but as perfectly sincere as shorter greetings, were those now exchanged. Elizabeth directed Frisel to carry home her mantle; and listened with a sad enough heart to Gideon's long narrative of disappointment. In her turn she unfolded a part—not the ten-thousandth part of her own anxieties, fears, and wild imaginings.

"So ye're no' ready yet to resign your idol?" said Gideon—"to say '*Thy* will be done,' an it were to streek him wi' your ain hand in a bloody shroud. I ken, alack! it's a sair tug to the unrenewed natural heart."

"Oh!" cried Elizabeth, clasping her hands in

agony. “ You have heard—you know something—some dreadful thing ! Tell me—tell me all ! ”

A little alarmed by her agitation, and the deadly hue which overspread her face, Gideon hastened to say that he knew nothing. “ But answer the question I ha’e propounded to ye, my bairn. The physician maun look down into the spirit’s ails—yea probe them to the quick before he can minister the remedy.”

Elizabeth saw he was playing the divine—a game which even Gideon could not always resist—and replied, “ Mr. Haliburton, you are a good man, but why torture me thus ? I cannot—I cannot—’tis beyond human power—woman’s power what you require. God forbid such effort were required of me. Heaven does not try me so severely,—why will you ? ”

“ Because I would have you cultivate the frame of spirit which holds at nought husband and bairn, house and land,” said he stoutly.

“ I hold house and land at as small value as you can do, Mr. Haliburton,” said Elizabeth, proudly.

“ Ay, there it is ! but the human idol—the clayey image !—that cannot be renounced. I ha’e remarked, ’Lizbeth, in the course o’ my sma’

experience, that the love o' man often proves the Enemy's maist tempting bait wi' young professin' Christian gentlewomen—them that wad ha'e despised gowd ear-rings, and gauze mutches, and gauds and toys, and bravely resisted the allurements o' the singing men, and the singing women, and held at nought the lust of the eye and the pride of life—I ha'e seen them e'en the readiest to slide into this cunningly devised snare; fall away from their first love, and their high respect for gospel ministers, about the days o' courtship; and, after marriage, grow as careless, thowless, cauldribe Christians as ye wad wish to see. The blackest ill that can befall a young Christian woman"—and Gideon raised his voice—"is to be joined to what she calls the man o' her heart—puir, deluded, blinded worm, seeking her heaven on the earth—ae potsherd o' the dust falling down to worship anither. It's lamentable, 'Lizbeth, to see the kindest and gentlest o' the womenkind the maist prone to this deadly, soul-killing, creature-worship—even yoursel', 'Lizbeth; and if it should please Him to rebuke and lead back your wandering heart, what should signify to you the fleeting affections of a frail thing o' the dust, whose breath is in his nostrils?"

At another season—in another person's case, Elizabeth would have understood all this precisely as it deserved to be understood. But now it looked like the very painting of her fears.

“ You wish to bid me read my sin in my punishment,” said she in a voice of deep emotion ; and her head sunk on her bosom—“ to tell me that I am forgotten—cast off already !” This was wrung forth in very bitterness of spirit ; and her heart-struck tone, and despairing attitude, at once affected and alarmed her ghostly monitor.

“ Forgotten ! na, na, my bairn, ye were no made to be forgotten. Possess your spirit in patience, 'Lizbeth.—Forgotten !” Gideon looked as if he could have knocked down any one who durst forget her.

“ Oh ! I can tell myself of patience. Speak to me of comfort, of cheer. Tell me, think you is *he* well. Does he remember Ernescraig ?”

“ Mair it's to be feared than he remembers his Maker,” groaned forth Gideon. “ Oh, the deadly snare fond young creatures prove to ilk ither ! 'Lizbeth, there was a lass ance”— And Gideon in his zeal was about to reveal, as a warning to his pupil, some of the wanderings of his own imagination in the days of his vanity—the sinful

yearnings and fond idolatry into which even he had been led by human love, but he checked the impulse, and went on—"If that should pleasure ye, which ought, were ye to take a right view of it, rather to grieve, be ye satisfied—that his bauld, brave spirit keeps pace in this wild gallop e'en wi' your ain fond silly one. Puir fond things! But the Lord's gude time will come wi' ye baith."

"I trust that no time will come in which we shall not be to each other the most beloved of *human* beings," thought Elizabeth; but she kept the sentiment to herself.

"Forget ye!" continued Gideon, ruminating—"Na, na! that wad na do neither. The natural man, which I thought weel subdued, was stirring in my ain auld breast at the distress o' that puir blinded youth even while—as became me as a faithful minister of God's word—I laid before him the iniquity—the grievous self-willed sin of placing his affections on sic a frail perishable commodity as yoursel'—of a comely countenance as ye be, Burd 'Lizbeth."

"'Pon my word I scarce know how to thank you Mr. Haliburton, for this good service", said Elizabeth, now laughing; while the thought of her

secret, quick-beating, raptured heart, was—"He loves me ! he loves me ! I am not forgotten.—Oh, how could my base fears—my baser suspicions—thus wrong the truth to which even prejudice does justice !"

Whatever salutary impressions might have been made on Elizabeth's mind by Gideon's denunciations, or her own apprehensions, it is to be feared they all faded away like the morning dew from the grass, before the delightful conviction that she was fondly remembered still ; and her heart yearning with deeper tenderness to him whom all things tended to endear, she walked on, giving, it must be owned, a very distracted attention to Gideon's somewhat involved and obscure definition of the misty boundaries which, according to him, separate a permitted, from a sinful degree of mortal attachment.

Though human charities held so low a place in Mr. Haliburton's creed, they possessed a very extended dominion over his sympathies. In the midst of his harangue, turning to the abstracted Elizabeth, and probably having a key in his own early recollections of the "lass that was ance," to the language of the sigh which just swelled her bosom, just parted her rich lip, he turned away

with a grim smile of mixed character, muttering to himself—"Oh! that love, that blinded and blinding love! It's little she is thinking of me or my lecture." And on this discovery, he prudently began to talk of how they were to institute inquiries for Wolfe Grahame.

Ireland was at this time in a very convulsed state—almost in open rebellion. Business was nearly suspended—travelling was dangerous. The mails had been robbed more than once, and in this way Gideon not irrationally accounted for Wolfe's silence, which in secret was beginning to alarm himself, and which he longed to see satisfactorily accounted for.

"I ken that Saunders Urc, shoemaker in the Gorbals, a savoury professor, 'Lizbeth, is weel acquaint wi' the Penpont carrier, who is ane o' our ain hill-side folk himsel.' The Penpont carrier will likely ha'e some channel o' conveyance to Stranraer, where Robert Maxwell, victualler, will likely ken somebody at the Port."

Elizabeth, limited as was her knowledge of life, smiled over this singular line of posts for communicating with a young officer of dragoons, who, plain and unpretending man as he was in the bosom of his home, was, she rather thought, inclin-

ed to abate nothing of his real consequence when among strangers. She said she would be patient a little longer.

While the plan was discussing the guest of Harletillum once more came in sight, checked the speed of his horse, and again in passing bowed to Elizabeth, while he vouchsafed a rather astonished side-glance at her companion.

“Thae sparks o’ Haretillum’s are blawn about this haill country-side. Come, ’Lizbeth, I maun see you through the loanings.” Gideon talked of Grahame, and she listened, cheered her with good hopes of early accounts from Ireland, and she was cheered; assured her that there was, he dreaded, no near prospect of Wolfe seeing the sinful enormity of his “creature-worship,”—and, notwithstanding her acute perception of the ludicrous, she smiled as much in joy as in mirth; finally, for what strange messengers will not Cupid sometimes press into his service, Gideon, without a word, pushed something into her hand, as if ashamed of being the conveyancer of “toys” and prohibited wares, and with a hurried benediction took his leave.

The midnight hour and the two chimes that sounded next, found Elizabeth still lingering over

Gideon's oddly delivered packet. It was the picture of her lover. The arts have made rapid strides in Scotland since that period ; but this miniature was not even of the first order of contemporary excellence. It had however been sent by *him*—it was intended to resemble him. Elizabeth strove, in spite of her better taste, to admire it as an exquisite specimen of art. It was a spontaneous feeling to prize it as the most valued gift of affection, to address to it a thousand fond murmurs, to bestow on it a hundred kisses, notwithstanding the disapprobation of a taste which, perhaps after all, might be fastidious and exacting; for not even Raphael could have painted this resemblance so as to fill the imagination of Elizabeth. The heart's first objection—"Tis like him—and not he"—what effort of art could remove that !—" I must not blame the artist's skill," thought she. " Cold and serious he looks on me—the expression never changing—the eye-beam never mingling with mine—never compelling mine to bow down before its burning glance in sweet and willing subjection. But who save myself can divine all which that passionate countenance may convey. They may give me those brown curls—' the open forehead full of bounty brave ;' but the lips—the eyes with

all their rich, and varied, and glowing meanings—how could this cold dead thing give forth even their shadowy resemblance. Elizabeth, all idolatrous as she was charged with being, needed not, it appeared, an actual image to assist her worship ; for highly as the picture was prized, she now turned from it to look inward on the breathing image, which love's own hand had drawn on her heart in lines of fire, glowing, deep-traced, inerradicable.

Such then was the immediate effect of Gideon's pious exhortations and warnings.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE JOURNEY.

‘No word of Goodman Dull yet?’

SHAKSPEARE.

THE reader cannot be supposed, on so slight an acquaintance, to feel much interest in the fortunes of the young soldier, who, some time back in this narrative, went forth to do battle with the rebels of Ireland. There is, however, a principle of sympathy very useful to the young adventurer in life, an interest taken in his prosperity, for the sake of those to whom he is dear, which he has had no personal opportunity of exciting in his own behalf; and on this we presume in now for a little changing the course of the narrative.

With more management than was perhaps necessary in a country where there was little chance of misconstruing the nature of their connexion,

Captain Wolfe Grahame contrived to pilot himself and his companion through the various towns on their route, till on the fourth day they reached "Auld Ayr." They did not, however, at all times travel in company—for Gideon almost every night diverged into the moors, where some little thatched building, without chimneys, constructed on the model of a farmer's salt-bucket, shewed a Cameronian place of worship, and gave hope of a neighbouring cottage equally modest in appearance, inhabited by some one of his truly apostolic brethren. It suited alike ill with Gideon's devotional and parsimonious habits to sojourn in even the humblest places of public entertainment, and would, besides, have been a breach of the customs of his order. When either ecclesiastical or secular business led them from home they had their regular stage-houses; and never was lying palmer, or bare-foot friar more welcome at even-tide to the chimney-corner of franklin or yeoman, than was the wandering Camcronian minister to the ingle-neuk of the primitive farmers in the hill-country of the south-west of Scotland. The residences of the regular preachers were necessarily few and far apart; but lay members were, at that time, scattered throughout all those pastoral districts at easy dis-

tances ; and some pious and hospitable widow, or wealthy childless couple, had both a comfortable *spence* for the man of God, and a *barn* for the wandering beggar, or humble travelling merchant. Even in families less able to exercise hospitality, there was often some "Prophet's Chamber," curiously dove-tailed into a labyrinth of wooden-walled beds, which seldom wanted an occasional occupant. A shed and a little coarse fodder were more grudgingly bestowed upon Jenny Geddes and steeds of her degree, which, in those times, were as well known on the old drove-roads in the southern counties, as are the short-lived horses which draw his Majesty's mail from St. Alban's to London at the present day.

On this kindly footing, Mr. Gidcon was spending an evening in a muirland farm-house "behind the hills where Stinchar flows," with a grey-headed elder of his sect ; and when he next day, by appointment, met Captain Wolfe Grahame on the coast, it was so late that they entertained some apprehension of reaching their next resting place. There was sickness in the family which Gidcon had visited, and dissensions among the scattered flock ; and when the minister let it be understood, that he had been detained by sympathy for the sick and

the sorrowful, and in healing divisions and repairing breaches in the Zion of the Stinchar, he seemed to take for granted that no farther apology was necessary. In ordinary circumstances he never prolonged his visits, nor, as the gudewives remarked, "abused discretion." It was generally night-fall before he arrived at his quarters; and by day-break, with the unbribed assistance of the herd-boy, he and Jenny Geddes were soberly plodding on to their next station.

The friends had already traversed a good part of the interior of Ayrshire, in hopeless search of the daughter of the midwife. A threatening evening was closing in on a rough gusty day, when they found themselves on the seaside, but still much farther from their place of destination for the night than the state of the weather made agreeable.—The latter part of their day's journey lay along a bold, wild, and broken line of coast, traversed by a road, leading now around low headlands, then sweeping into bays, and anon winding and climbing round the iron faces of high and rugged promontories. The only thing visible on this road, for many hours, was the Port-Patrick *Fly*, crawling onwards in the distance like the "shard-borne beetle."

It was a tiresome day's journey to Grahame ; for Jenny Geddes was a lady too much accustomed to have her own way, at all times, to be easily put off it now ; and though he sometimes gave her a smack or a poke, which made her throw up her hind legs to the evident discomposure of her rider, she soon fell back into her accustomed jog-trot. So, by way of pastime, whenever a piece of level ground was met, Grahame, and his good steed Saladin, took a youthful scamper for a mile or two ahead, and either waited for their friends, or returned, welcomed by Jenny's amorous neigh, to announce their mutual discoveries. The last discovery which Wolfe made before night-fall was unpleasant enough—a skiff in the offing trimming her sails to meet the gale, and exhibiting marks of distress and alarm.

“ We are like to have a wild night, Mr. Gideon,” said the young soldier, who had rode back to join his friend. “ I wish to goodness we were at that Crossgates of Caberax, or whatever you call it. I will insist on your remaining there all night with me, notwithstanding those hospitable friends all along who entertain you every night I think. You must stay with me indeed. I am

rich, sir,—I have lands and beeves—or I shall have them.”

This was the light speech which often accompanies a purse as light.

We have spoken of Gideon's parsimonious habits. The phrase was incorrect. That man cannot be called parsimonious who freely spends his whole living. Gideon's was a small one—but his wants were far less—so that he was comparatively a rich man; and, what is more rare, positively thought himself so, when at the end of the half-year he paid his few debts, and gave to “him that needed” all that remained over, literally laying up his treasure in heaven. With something of the complacency inseparable from the consciousness of possessing property—for he had a guinea and some shillings in his pocket—he replied to Wolfe's proposal of defraying their common travelling charges,

“Na, na! Captain Wolfe, make yoursel' easy about that, my lad. I'm far frae being a needy man. Did ye no hear of the hunder merks augmentation, man? I never looked for it, I'm sure; but my lot as to temporals has been casten in pleasant places. What wi' ae thing, and what wi' anither—the ruckle of a house, (the Session are to

set a'man to mend the theck, and have it made warm and water-tight aboon the bed—in summer the holes in the roof were airy and pleasant enough,) the kail-yard, and the gang o' the common muir for Jenny, I cannot call the living o' the Sourholes muckle waur, *communibus annis*, put the head o' the sow to the tail o' the grice, than five-and-thretty English pounds."

This was whispered—a pause between every emphatic word—in a quite confidential style, Gideon advancing his mouth to the young man's ear, and Jenny kindly laying her long dewy nose on the proud neck of Saladin, a freedom which he scarcely appeared to relish.

"I have a kind people," continued Gideon.—
 "The gudewives have been on me to take a drop tea-water in my loneliness. Burd* 'Lizbeth has given me the trick o' that too—and to be sure I can weel afford it; but for a man like me, Captain Wolfe, to be pettling himsel' up with delicates, while mony a precious saint and puir thing want a meltith o' bare porridge, is no to be thought of.—Make me worthy o' a' this kindness! and forbid that riches prove a snare to me a second time!"

* Burd---A lady, a damsel.

“No fear of that, sir—I shall be your guarantee,” said Grahame.

“I kenna, Captain Wolfe. Let him that thinks he standeth tak’ heed. I was laid under sore and dark temptation this very time twal-month, in the shape of what ye call a *double Joe*. I had never seen coined money o’ the splendour and value. It was paid me in the Martlemas half-year’s stipend. So I laid by my golden idol i’ the kist-coffer, in a horn snuff-mull; and in the very watches of the night, even upon my quiet bed, the demon o’ covetousness, Mammon himself, would put in my head my golden Johannes, and how I could best put it out to usury, and lay anither and anither till’t: but I wrestled, and, wi’ the help o’ the Mighty, prevailed. I trust my bank and coffer will be my breck pouch, or some puir widow wife’s meal ark in a’ time coming. I’ll ha’e nae mair locking o’ coffers—nae Tubal-Cain wark in my tents.”

The good man shut his grey eyes, and appeared engaged for a minute in ejaculatory thanksgiving, for this signal deliverance from the snare of riches, and the power of covetousness. A smile rose on Grahame’s lip—a half-heaved sigh chased

it away as he contrasted his own illumination, and the knowledge of good and evil obtained by eating the bitter apples of experience, with the primitive simplicity of Gideon.

“ With your known hospitality,” said Wolfe, “ I could not have conceived you very rich—so you must indeed allow me”—

“ Hospitality ! little to brag o’ in that way, my lad. To gi’e a meal of hamely meat, or a brat o’ auld duds to a needy fellow-creature that falls in my way, in the name of Him who has given me so largely to enjoy, is but a sma’ matter, Captain Wolfe. To be sure my auld garments are, as ye say, nac great shakes.”—And he cast his eye on a coat cuff, of which every thread might be counted without the aid of a weaver’s magnifying glass.—“ But this is my kirk and causey clothes.”

“ Nay, I rather think I have sometimes seen them very great *shakes*,” said Grahame, laughing.

But a pun, however bad or good, fell alike innocuous on honest Gideon, who never had the most glimmering perception of a double meaning in any thing he had ever heard in his life : so the young man went on—“ I am sure if you are not hospitable, I don’t know who is—I have known

you keep daft folk, and lamiters, and beggars, about the Sourholes for weeks and months together—our friend Miss Jacky Pingle, for instance.”

“ Small thanks to me for that, lad ; we were auld stair neighbours, as I have aften tauld you ; and, when her brain is no a’ the higher, she has a sleight wi’ her thimble and her shears that’s just wonderfu’ the women-folk and the Laird tell me—for I’m an ignoramus in needle-work. In that six weeks she last sojourned at the Sourholes, she did as much white seam, and embroidery upon the heels o’ my rig-and-fur stockings, as would have cost me twenty-pence sterling to the school-mistress o’ Castleburn ; so let us ne’er reckon that turn hospitality.—We are ready enough to be vain-glorious without calling the keeping of puir Jacky Pingle, (whom never a one would take off my hands neither,) by the name of a grace of decvine injunction, whereby some have entertained angels.”

“ I certainly do not mistake your keeping poor Miss Jacky for entertaining an angel,” said Graham, laughing again ; “ but I am sure, as I said, if you are not hospitable I don’t know who is. By the way, I know of no word in the English language more abused, or of more ambiguous meaning

than this same.—One hears of the hospitality of the feudal chieftain. I beg to place it exactly on the same level with that of the modern hospitality of the candidate for parliament ;—so much beef and ale,—so many balls and feasts,—for so much reputation to be maintained, or service done or expected.—‘ The hospitalities of the *Whim*,’ (Mr. Hutcheon’s mansion) and such sort of places, which we sometimes hear of, are another spurious species of this kindly virtue:—splendid entertainments, a sacrifice to personal vanity, given in ostentation, and received, as they deserve to be, with indifference or scorn, by persons who neither need nor crave kindness nor countenance, though they may lack amusement. In a lower rank, the same feeling of vanity leads another class of persons to *fête* all sorts of people, artists, travellers, recruiting-officers, players, and so forth—the wonderful—the wild ! and this, forsooth, must be hospitality ! This unfortunate grace has much to answer for, which ought, in all conscience, to be laid elsewhere. No man, Mr. Gidcon, was ever yet a martyr to this virtue, if exercised in its pure and simple sense. The entertainer of the desolate and the widow, the sick, the maimed, the blind, he who leads the bashful unfriended stranger to his modest feast, will never

I venture to predict, ruin himself by hospitality, a virtue which, according to some folks, fills half the bankrupt list."

"Verily, there is a smack of rationality in what you say, Captain Wolfe."

"I am sure hospitality, if it has a home on earth, still lingers in Strathoran with you and my uncle," said Wolfe. "I vow there is more genuine kindness in the dinner he so often gives to these poor devils, the Rookston peripatetic surgeon, scouring our country-side on sixpenny bleedings and shilling blisters, and our nonjuring curate, with his triple duty and quarter pay, than in twenty Lord Mayors' banquets, or letter-of-introduction dinners. I leave him in evil times, Mr. Haliburton; but I trust a blessing will remain on the kind old soul that never once sent a hungry heart from his gate. I am sure if I am not a better man as long as I live for having known you both, I deserve to be hanged."

Upon hearing this suspicious doctrine, savouring indeed of ramping prelacy, Gideon girded up his loins for the polemic combat, and was about, at some length, to correct the young soldier's heterodox notions of charity, mercy, and hospitality, when the youth called his attention to the strug-

gling skiff, which a commanding point of the road now enabled them to see clearly. The lazy chill mists which had all day long hooded the braes, now rolled fast down upon their path. Cape, and island, and promontory, which had all day stretched away in hazy perspective, were, one by one, blotted out; and when the horsemen rounded the sheltering angle of a screen of rocks, they were at once exposed to the unmitigated fury of the tempest, which came wildly rushing from the ocean, shaking drizzling vapours from its wings, as they flapped against the splintered cliffs, at whose base the full tide was boiling and lashing. The full moon was drifting on in the heavens through dun and yellow clouds, as if she too had gone astray, and had to maintain the same struggle above which the little vessel held in the weltering tide.—Altogether, the prospect was comfortless and painful.

“ We will have a foul night, Mr Haliburton. The wind has ever some mischief in its head, when it whistles lillibulero at its destructive work in that way. Can you see those poor souls yet ? ”

Gidcon groaned—“ Alack no ! Those who go down to the sea in ships, and see the wonders of the great deep, have much to thole as well as to see, Captain Wolfe. Let us commit them to Him

who sitteth on the floods, and holdeth the winds in the hollow of his hand ; who maketh the cloud their tabernacle !—and push on Jenny to Mossbrettles to John Fennick's. He wones in a slack near by the seaside ; and we can hing out his lantern to guide the boat off a wanchancy bit down there, that has smashed many a goodly vessel. Profane folk name it the De'il's Saut-basket ; and in very deed I never heard it get another name—so what can I ca' it."

" And very well named too, sir ; but as I trust these poor de—— that is souls, will not be laid in his Black Majesty's pickle to-night, I shall push on and do what I can with your friends ; and you may come up at your leisure with Jenny."

Mightily did Gideon spur not to be left behind in the race of humanity, and often did he apostrophize Jenny Geddes ; but before he reached the Caberax, a fire was blazing on the low point, and Grahame stood there directing a group of young fellows, all ready and willing to obey his orders, or from their superior knowledge of the coast to suggest better expedients.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FARMER'S HALL.

From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs.

BURNS

TRAVELLING apostles, as well as every other description of traveller, are often, we think, fully as much indebted to the fair, as to the stern sex, for the comfort and kindness of their reception.

“ The best of the board, and the seat by the fire,”

had in Scotland, time immemorial, been the prescriptive right of the “ Haly-wark folk ;” and, nothing slackened in hospitality, David Pennick and his wife cordially welcomed “ the man of God ;” and, as he was cold and wet, and could be of no use whatever on the shore, laid hands of violent possession upon him as soon as he proposed going

to join the young men. So his clothes were changed for dry and warm garments, and he sat him snugly down in the chimney-nook.

If the evening was rough without, its discomfort served to enhance the cheerful couthiness of the Farmer's Ha'. This kitchen and hall—for it was the common room of the numerous family, and served for all domestic purposes—was a large apartment with strong, rough, stone walls, arched by shining smoky rafters, and furnished with a wide canopied open chimney. Through its picturesque intricacies a blazing fire filling the cradle-chimney, liberally fed from the neighbouring bog, diffused a ruddy lustre, richer and warmer than the costliest blaze ever yet shed through halls of pride, by wax candles or oil gas. A brazen sconce, a few bright copper utensils, and a *binck* well filled with pewter, did more for the apartment in the way of appropriate decoration than mirrors or pictures could have done. But the Ha' wanted not its pictures. In an antique, carved, oaken settle below the chimney canopy, discoursing with his guest, sat the grey-haired patriarch, clad in homespun muir-land grey, with a softened bearing between the stern old Covenanter and the “monarch of a shed,” regarding, with looks of sober kindness, his

well-disciplined subjects busy on all sides of him with their accustomed tasks and duties. Next to him but lower in place, on a tripod sat a little decent matron, (a maiden by the way,) his wife's aunt, carding wool to supply the spinning thrift of David's blooming woman-grown daughter, who merrily turned her wheel, with that subdued hum which was the nearest approach she durst make to profane singing in her father's honoured presence. Sometimes she involuntarily cast backwards a quick and bashful glance if a tirl was heard at the door pin, a movement which as constantly drew upon her the arch eye of a boy, her younger brother, who was stretched before the fire conning his Latin lesson for the next day. A ploughman nearly as old and grey as his master, was driving hob-nails into a clouted shoe; and a little in the back ground the herd-boy was twisting a bird's cage of twigs—a little boy, the Benjamin of David's old age, looking on as the wonderful frame grew beneath the cunning right hand of Jock. A squab, four-cornered, ruddy, serving wench pounded away in another corner, mashing a pot of potatoes for the common supper of the family, an allowance which might have fed a whole hill-side congregation; and the gudewife, a comely well-thriven matron,

many years younger than her lord, though on hospitable thoughts intent, superintended the whole establishment. A goodly and gracious show of black puddings, hung to be smoked in the chimney, showed that good things were going; for the *Mart* was killed. And while Gideon and his host seated apart—

reasoned high
Of Providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate,
Fixed fate—

the fate of an *evracle* was sealed, perhaps in honour of Captain Grahame.

“ My worthy father—ye’ll mind him weel, Mr. Gideon,” said the dame—“ had aye a joke, that there was a natural friendship and couthiness between a black coat and a black puddin’; and ye’se have one to relish the potatoes this night if it were my last.” And she cast an eye of pride over her plentiful stores. This was said in the absence of David, who had gone forth to see that the cattle were properly foddered.

David was a good deal of the Milton in his domestic circle. Except towards the darling Benjamin he was indeed a very strict disciplinarian with all his household. Few external marks of mirth durst be shown in his presence; but when he with-

drew to his private out-door devotions, or to his wooden-walled dormitory, there came an hour of juvenile relaxation to the family, at which David winked hard, as every sensible absolute monarch should do who wishes to avoid open revolt among his subjects. But peace, and plenty, and goodness were about him; and the whispered gibe of the boys to their sister or to the maid-servant, and the matron's frequent whispered rebuke of—"Will ye no be quiet?—the gudeman will just fell ye!" shewed that genuine gaiety of heart was here, its native spring uninjured though its expression might be subdued.

While David was occupied in littering his cattle, grumbling a little at the protracted absence of his son and the younger farm-servants, who still fed a bickering fire on the shore, Mr. Gideon strode off in that direction, guided by the signal lights.

The police established along this line of coast at that period, was, of necessity, extremely vigilant and severe. The pernicious influences of that evil time, which steeled the human breast against its kind, had even extended to this region of tranquillity and comparative safety; and the inhabitants of the Scottish side were disposed to view whatever

approached from the opposite coast, with great distrust and unreasonable aversion.

The family of another farmer, who, with David, was joint occupier of this headland moor, were still engaged in the latest harvest-work of a tardy season. During the whole afternoon of this tempestuous day, this farmer had observed the skiff beating about in the bay, and conjectured that it had stolen out from some inlet on the beleaguered coast of Antrim, which perhaps its crew found more perilous than the iron-bound shores of the south-west of Scotland, and the coil of waves, currents, and breakers, amid which they were struggling. The fate of the little vessel had indeed, for some hours back, been the object of eager and agitating interest to the people on the coast. Rebels, murderers, or incendiaries its crew might be—still they were human, and in this hour of mortal peril the claim was felt in all its force. The presence and exertions of Captain Grahame had, moreover, by this time brought humanity into good fashion; and though the discipline of David Fennick's household did not permit his womankind to roam abroad, there were several females standing with the group which Gideon and David joined; and their sympa-

thies were fully awakened, and had the strongest influence on those around them.

“ Oh ! if they could reach the Cutter—or if the Cutter could reach them ! ” cried one of the women, who watched the labouring skiff with intense interest, uttering stifled groans as the little storm-tossed speck was seen through the opening spin-drift, or swept from view by the swell of the breakers, and expressing renewed hope as the frail thing again rose in sight, and gallantly mounted the ridge of the billow.

“ The Cutter ! ” cried a man of greater information. “ That would be gaun between the de'il and the deep sea wi' a witness ! 'Od they may be saying their neck-verse if the Cutter overtake them ; and she has been full chase after them since the skiff was first seen aff' the Scart's Craig. It's just as weel to be drowned I think, David, at the Almighty's pleasure, as hanged, drawn, and quartered by the government.”

“ Wo is me ! wo is me ! ” said the female speaker—“ This is nae joking matter. Be they what they will, they are warm flesh and blood like ourselves.”

“ Ay, and soul and spirit, Euphane ! ” said David Fennick—“ puir, sinfu' perishing souls like

yoursels, sirs, rocking and reeling on the brink of an eternity, whilk may be as near to us as to them ; though there appear to us but a moment's space and a rotten plank, between them and the fierce and fiery indignation which hastens to consume."

"Let us hope better things for them, friend David," said Gideon, "baith for time and for eternity. Is there no balm in Gilcad? Is there no Physician there? Is there not hope for the sinner, ay, even were the last sands o' his glass rinnin' low? How shall man, proud worm! limit the dealing of Omnipotence with the immortal spirits He has called into existence!"

Now to David's long ears this sounded very like false doctrine; and he delivered a pious speech, which so stirred the "Old Adam" in the heart of his neighbour-tenant of the Moss, that he exclaimed—"I wad rather hear the sugh o' the south-east win' that's to blaw thae puir battered Irish deevils bye the De'il's Saut-backet, than a' the peching and graining e'er was grained on a hill-side"

At this instant a ruffian billow rushing in with headlong fury, swept the little vessel on, till it almost seemed to touch the firm earth where our

anxious group were assembled. The blaze of the fire danced and flared on the foamy crest of the wave and in the faces of the crew, consisting of three men and two females, one of the latter—strange to say!—holding the helm. Words of cheer—of sympathy—of counsel, were eagerly shouted from the land by Grahame and the other young men; and ropes were actively thrown out; but the same tremendous wave which had borne the skiff onward, snatched it back in its fearful recoil, far from sight—for ever from sight, it was feared—and every eye was fixed, and every heart shivered, as a yell rose from some unseen drowning wretch over whom the billows closed for ever. In a few seconds the skiff rose once again into view, but with one man short of its original number. Still the little crew bore them gallantly, with firmness and presence of mind, which gave the spectators something of the wild delight experienced in witnessing some noble pastime, in which ruffian strength is matched against skill, conduct, and energy.

A signal gun was fired from the sea. The flash was seen distinctly; the report came broken and driven about by the wind.

“That’s the Cutter still in chase,” said David’s

neighbour. "But the tempest will do their business. I gi'e them up. Come hame, lads, and bring the ropes wi' ye."

"O ye of little faith!" shouted Gideon. "Can He that let loose the winds no stay them? Is His arm shortened—is His hand straitened? Did He make the dry land and not the sea also? Is His time not a good time?—is His hand not a gracious hand?—Bide ye still."

Another "ruffian billow" again tossed the skiff up on its foamy mane, and then seemed to gulp it down into its tremendous jaws.

"O, Lord! of thy infinite mercy remember thy puir perishing creatures!" cried Gideon.—"That, neighbours, was a fearfu' whomle!"

"Ay! that jaw gave e'en your faith a heisie minister," said David's profane neighbour.

Contrary to all expectation, a heavy shower having somewhat beat down the fury of the storm, the little vessel, once more out at sea, was seen to weather the point round which it had all the afternoon been beating. Grahame and Robert Fennick, an intelligent and active young man, David's eldest son, and in reality the most useful person of the rural group, were certain that they had seen, in the bright glimpse of a still-wading moon the

shadow of its little mast quivering on the water, and that it had got through the breakers, and past the entrance of that place which Gideon so much disliked to name. Others of the number as confidently predicted the inevitable destination of the boat to be this same De'il's Saut-backet.

Whatever her fate was, she was gone from their sight, and the rain was pouring in torrents, so they dispersed, Mr. Gideon going to his friend's hospitable hearth, and Wolfe Grahame, notwithstanding David's kind if not frank invitation, to the little way-side public-house where he had left his horse.

David's dame had, in the course of her experience, often seen a comfortable supper prove a very agreeable diversion of polemical discourse. Not so on this evening. The argument between the learned patriarchs on the oaken settle in the chimney-neuk, waxed hotter and hotter, and the black pudding, colder and colder, to her secret grief and open discontent. Monkshaugh had often scornfully said, that "pease brose would please the minister better than wine and wassail bread," so that he got leave to "preach owre his dish."

Mrs. Fennick, though the bosom companion of a self-denying saint, had a housewife's natural pride in her black, and in her white puddings; and

Gideon fell considerably in her good graces from this open disrespect to her good things. Had he sojourned but two days longer in her frugal *menage*, he would probably have recovered this lost ground, and gained the more lasting and substantial praise of being “easily shot by wi’ his victuals”—As it was, she cried “Patience!” and turned the puddings.

The subject for which her savoury messes were on this night permitted to freeze, was one which, though foreign to our story, afterwards shook the church of Sourholes to its foundation, and involved the latter days of its presiding apostle in much trouble and turmoil.

There was no Cameronian meeting within twenty miles of David Fennick’s dwelling of Mossbretles. The ancient adherents to this *nommade* faith, remained at home on Sabbaths and read their bibles, when they could not attend the public worship of their own sect; but the younger members of David’s family, had, of late, strayed into the neighbouring parish-church—at first covertly, but now with less care for concealment. There they had, among other defilements, acquired a taste for a sort of church-music, certainly of no very alluring kind, but totally different from that to which their vener-

able chief had been accustomed. To carry his domestic plagues to the climax, Orpheus, assuming the disguise of a yellow lank weaver from the Riccartown of Kilmarnock, “fashed wi’ a stamack complaint,” had rambled into the parish, and, in widow Bonalie’s public, set up an evening class for teaching this new-fangled psalmody. In an evil hour David was teased into granting permission to his children to attend; and now, instead of the old reverend way of twanging out the psalm, line by line, “their rants,” David said, “ran straight on run-line”—thus invading, in fact destroying for ever, his immutable privilege of doling out line by line, rather than suffer any interruption, or suspension of their own “most sweet voices.”

The controversy was still novel to Gideon; and we must do him the justice to say, that, notwithstanding his early prejudices and associations were all on the side of the quaint antique method of chanting the psalms, his naturally candid spirit and sincere understanding rated the subject at its true importance; and David found a much less zealous partisan than he had reckoned upon.—He indeed took but an indifferent part in the afflictions of David.

“Is it not written—there shall be line upon line?” grinned David, the thin white locks that straggled over his pale sunken temples trembling in the eagerness of his controversial zeal.—“What’s your opinion of that scripture, minister?”

“And is it not written—‘Praise ye *continually*—make a joyful noise?’” said Robert, the smiling champion of St. Cecilia and her new lights.

Gideon was smitten to the heart’s core with what he boldly pronounced this Pharisaical wark—“And wo is mine! David, to hear this din about robes and phylacteries taking place o’ the weightier matters of the law—and that in a corner of the vineyard ance fair and flourishing. But I’ll tell ye, gudeman, what has filled me with shame, and grief, and indignation. In Glasgow yonder, even in kirks pretending to be reformed, bands of singing bairns—they shame not to call them choirs—laddies and lassies lilting away at the praises of their Maker,—and as if it were an auld ballad or a ratt-rhyme; and this they call leading the worship of a Presbyterian congregation, in the most hallowed and heaven-like exercise of praise—themselves a’ dumb! If we maun ha’e a Popish preluding, take to the kist fu’ o’ whistles at ance, Robert. Tinkling brass wire, and sounding

timber boards, have neither hearts to harden nor souls to ensnare, like *puir simple bairns*."

Now this truly orthodox opinion was reckoned by David little better than "blinking the question," as in fact it was ; for he abominated bands of singing boys as utterly as did Gideon :—and indeed it is not easy to see how a mode of worship so simple—so spiritualized, if we may so say—as the Presbyterian, can tolerate this anomalous feature.

After delivering his testimony against this enormity, which was at that time quite a recent innovation, Mr. Gideon proceeded, as was his custom wherever he spent the night, to examine the young people and servants of the family, in their attainments in the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, and on their general religious knowledge.—The venerable head of the house had no reason to be ashamed of this exhibition. Whatever were their musical aberrations, they had been trained up in "the way they should go ;" and there was good hope that they might never far "depart from it." The boy who had conned his Latin lesson by the fire, the embryo preacher, next went over his *penna* and *docco* to the infinite delight of his mother. Even stern David grinned compla-

cent, and owned “human lear was nae do’ot a mean,” and melted into entire delight when his little favourite son, the rosy, smiling, curly-haired Davie, with a good deal of kindly prompting from mother, sister, maiden, and brother, in lisping accents went through his infant manual, and told “Who made him,” and “Who redeemed him,” very correctly.

“And who was the strongest man, Davie?”

“Samson,” replied Davie. “We ha’e a big grey Samson, the cart aver.”

“Very right, Davie,” said Gideon.—“And who was the wisest man?”

“Absalom,” cried Davie, undauntedly.

“O fie!” whispered the mother—“So-Sol-o—”

“Solomon,” shouted Davie, triumphantly.

“Very right!”

“And he’ll no be four till Candlemas!” whispered the mother, aside.

“And who was the meekest man, Davie?”

“Job.”

“Hush, Davie—fie!” cried the sister.

“But it was though—Moses,” cried Davie, dealing her a playful blow, with the petulance of a spoiled, lively, and clever child.

Old David knitted his stern brows over this infant trick of the carnal heart in his beloved child.

"That was na right, my little man," said Gideon, in grave rebuke ; and Davie looked alarmed, and with some cause. "But we must make a pass-over ; for puir Davie sees his fau't. Think first now—what they call the Gudeman of Mossbrettles, and tell me "Who was the man according to God's own heart?"

"Wee Davie's ain daddy David," cried the cunning and affectionate little rogue, throwing himself into his father's arms ; and old David involuntarily kissed his brow, his grey eyes glistening, and after a short fervid clasp put him hastily away, as if ashamed of this emotion of natural affection.

"Ye think me like auld Eli, minister," said he. And he instantly walked forth to meditate, and question of his own relaxed spirit, and screw up his resolution to chastise wee Davie.

The little victim when invited to a private conference in his father's dormitory, first had his supper to eat, and then his prayers to say—and, finally, appealed to his mother, who, rebellious as her heart was, durst not for her life have interfered between her stern lord and his just displeasure ; so the poor

trembler disappeared, Gideon's heart yearning over him. The calm expostulating voice of David was heard for some time, and the low thick sob of Davie,—then rose the voice of one in earnest prayer, and there was a moment's pause followed by Davie's shrill scream of "Oh ! father, father !—reason wi' me, and shew me my error, a wee whilie langer ;" but the inexorable scourge descended rapidly, perhaps severely ; for David Fennick was no joker in any business to which he seriously thought that duty called him.

Such was the stern discipline of Scotland in those days. A great deal has since been said for, and against the use of the rod. We have recorded wee Davie Mossbrettles' opinion, as decidedly in favour of prayer and reasoning, and against stripes.

Davie was put to bed ; and old David again walked out to compose his spirit.

Some pious neighbours had, by this time, come in to gather the manna chance-dropt in this wilderness. Preachers and Probationers were often enough coming to Mossbrettles ; but it was not every night that a true-blue unmingled Cameronian minister tarried there. David "had gotten a Levite for his priest," and felt his personal consequence augmented accordingly. So he beckoned forward

his modest guests to chairs, and stools, and tubs overturned to make seats, with exactly the patronizing feelings of a fine lady, who has caught a fashionable poet or singer, for the amusement of her friends and the *ecbat* of her rout, and of its celebration-paragraph in the Morning Post of the next day. How essentially the same, after all, are the enjoyments of the great human family, however their external manifestations and their moral influences may vary.

The seeds of poetry in Gideon's character, were not unfrequently displayed in his selection of a portion of scripture to be read, or of the psalm to be sung. On this night, from this humble rustic group, a small farmer and a few poor Scottish cotters, from the bosom of the barren moor, there rose to heaven, slowly chanted line by line, one of the most beautiful lyrics that ever was composed, judging of it merely as a literary composition—the 104 Psalm—the hymn of Universal nature to the Universal Creator! Far higher was Gideon's standard of judging the inspired writings.

A simple, scriptural, earnest, and affectionate prayer, almost as comprehensive as the hymn which had been sung, forgetting no class nor condition of sentient beings—concluded the do-

mestic exercise ; and when the group rose from their knees, Robert, David's eldest son, "a noble peasant," grasped the minister's hand and said—

"Your ain, sir, and my father's auld-fashioned sughin out o' the plaintive *Dundee*, and the noble *Martyrs*, dinnel stronger on the heart-strings after a,' than a' their crinkum crankum new tunes."

"Robert, my man, if ye are led to think sae it is weel," replied Gideon. "So grieve not the grey-haired man i' the neuk, whose soul has travelled for the weal o' yours, ay when sweet sleep sealed your ain eye-lids. Keep ye by these holy harmonies, wi' whilk the wail of the curlew and the plover, and the roar of the linn ha'e chimed in yon brave day : yea, the sweet melodies that rose in the night-watches, like myrrh and frankincense and the rich spices, frae these very moss-hags, and coves, and cleuchs round about us, whither the red arm o' persecution had driven forth the stout true hearts o' covenanted Ayr, and favoured Gallowa'—Ayr, whose plants were as an orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits. Alack ! that the canker-worm should creep in—that they should either dwine or die !"

This honest ancestral eulogy was highly acceptable to every present ear. But the puddings smok-

ing-hot were now served with the mashed potatoes, together with a jorum of stout, home-brewed, harvest ale, of which David partook very sparingly, Robert and Mr. Gideon with greater freedom.—Another hour passed in sober but social talk on public and family affairs. Gideon was pleased to hear that his friend David's "temporals" prospered, and that he was willing and eager to lend his carts, during the winter, to drive stones for the purpose of erecting a meeting-house in the vicinity. The honest man chose a private minute to confess to Gideon his sinful yearnings over the "bairn, wee Davie;" but Gideon slurred that offence on the present occasion, and, in spite of the "carts," rather warned his friend against "worldliness," and "coveteousness," and "spiritual pride," than excess of natural tenderness. From these sins David was certain that he stood wholly clear.

The whole family now retired to rest—to that "quiet sleep" for which Gideon had prayed—that quiet sleep which, in the words of his petition, 'is Thy gift to Thy chosen ones!'

CHAPTER IX.

THE EXILE.

What had he done to make him fly the land ?

SHAKSPEARE.

CAPTAIN WOLFE GRAHAME declined the hospitality of Mossbrettles, neither in aristocratic pride nor unsocial feeling, but simply because, without much vanity, he feared that he might put David's womankind out of their way, and because he was perhaps too modest to balance aright the trouble given against the honour imparted. His humility was rewarded by better quarters than the external shows of the wayside public, kept by the Widow Bonalie and her only daughter, warranted him to expect. On this evening they luckily had no other guest. Over their door-post the "ruddy lion ramped in gold" only for the amusement and solace of our friend.

Grahame changed his wet clothes for “fitting weed ;” and, with the landlady’s cordial permission, instead of sequestering himself in the chill dignity of the sanded parlour, occupied the chimney-corner of the kitchen, which, in every view, afforded metal more attractive. This apartment resembled, in most points, the family room of Mossbrettles, except that it was “got up for company.” Rows of pewter measuring pots of various calibre betokened that the vocations of the widow were not wholly agricultural ; and a series of rueful prints, coloured in the “bold style,” illustrative of the ballad of “Auld Robin Gray,” pinned round rough but very white walls, shewed that the feminine tastes of her ripe and rosy maiden, had not been under discipline so strict as David Fennick’s. The damsel herself, occupied exactly as David’s daughter had been, with a brisk and merry-going spinning-wheel, held, at the same time, on her knee, a huge stitched bunch of ballads, for which, we think, the Roxburgh Club would have given their weight in gold.

The jolly Widow Bonalic was none of the

“ Bigots of the iron time,
Who held the tuneful art a crime.”

“Ye’ll be frae the Port, C’aptain,” was her address to Wolfe, with whose style a landlady’s peculiar industry had made her acquainted.—“Awfu’ doings amang the croppies ! they say ; but the Irish were aye a wanrestfu’ generation. Randy rinthere-outs hawking this country—a perfect cess and harriement on a widow-woman in a public line.—It’s but like ten minutes sin’ the supervisor and twa Shirra maires were here, booted and spurred, het fit after some of thae clanjamphrey that were whommelling about in the bay this afternoon. I daur to say the de’il has gotten his ain out o’ them by this time ; for this has been a judgment-like evening. I mind scarce the like of it since the Windy Wodensday, which tirmed the roof aff this house—and grand Irish gentry wi’ us no twa days thereafter.”

“That must have been a memorable night over Scotland,” said Grahame ; and the spinning damsel, from some association, burst into song :

“ Wild blew the wind on that eerie night,

“ And wilder beat the rain ;

“ And still on its moan came the deep, deep groan

“ Of that ladye in her travail-pain,

“ Ma chree,

“ Of that ladye in her travail-pain.”

“Heavens !—and this is one of your ballads,”

cried Wolfe, snatching the bunch from her lap with little ceremony.

“Eh na, sir !” cried the widow, who was deeply engaged in the savoury mysteries of the frying-pan.—“Jean learned that frae ane Bess Slattery, an Irish horner-wife that hawks this country.—It’s about some auld-warld Edinburgh doings o’ folk now i’ their cauld grave.—But here’s a better story—your warm supper.”

“Gudewife, ye smell well,” said Grahame, trying to recover himself.

“Ay, and taste better,—so draw ye in, Captain, and make a comfortable meal o’ your ain country vivres.—Here’s ham and eggs—new laid eggs ; for ye ken Christmas is clocking-mass—and that’s no far aff—and mealy potatoes flaking like the honey-comb—and powdered butter—and roasted ingans—and”——

“Admirable !” interrupted Grahame.

“Had I but kenned, it should have been a stoved, recking howtowdie for your sake ; for I ance saw your uncle Monkshaugh, riding the Ayr circuit, a little genty mannie, wi’ cheeks like blush roses, and as trim as if he had come out of a band-box.”

The landlady had indeed, in humble phrase,

put her best foot foremost ; and the young soldier did a traveller's justice to her genial cheer. She saw that he appeared perfectly satisfied, and began, as is usual in those cases, to make numerous apologies. Self-justification as determined, would have been inevitable, had he expressed the smallest discontent with any part of her arrangements.

“ With the shortest blink o’ notice,” said she, “ I could make ony reasonable gentleman perfectly comfortable ; but we seldom get a ca’ here but frae drovers and jockeys, (though indeed the carriers halt here,) and sic like graith, gaun to the Ayr and Dumfreish markets. But I ne’er yet saw a real-born gentleman ill to please, if he saw gude will—I speak na of the gentleman that’s made by the tailor and the braid-claith. Nae higgling wi’ the *real* gentleman about an honest widow-woman’s fair lawin, or hingin’ on for twa or three bawbies o’ change back o’ a sca’ed crown-piece. To be sure I ha’e seen them bait their cattle here—they ne’er light down—gentlemen and noblemen baith, ye wadna ca’ out o’ your kale-yard. But mak’ your supper now ; this is a real ewe-milk kebbuck : I question if the gude-wife o’ Mossbrettles has the better o’t, wi’ a’ her airs.”

The provident hostess, after a good deal of preliminary bustle, next drew from its place of concealment in the heart of an immense suspended bundle of yarn, a small stone jar or *graybeard*, which she pronounced as sound, auld, pine-apple, Jamaica rum as ever sparkled to moonshine.

“ It smells like the clow gilliflowers through the house,” said she, snuffing up the ‘ rich distilled perfume.’ “ It’s but at Pasch and Yule, and high times, this is produced, Captain ; but the best in my house is little enough the night.”

“ Never paid duty, I dare say.”

“ Ye may swear it !—but little comes our way. The supervisor chield who was here this night, instead of watching the Croppies’ landing, as he should in duty do, keeps hounding his pack o’ riding offishers after the puir industrious boddies wha bring us a drap frae Arran, or up frae the ‘Troon, wi’ muckle risk baith to purse and person. The government, I whiles think, is no a hait better than in the persecuting times. ‘Troth, it’s very hard !”—

“ That the king won’t allow his industrious subjects to cheat him unmolested,” replied Wolfe, laughing ; and adding his acknowledgments for

the manifold kindness heaped upon him, to which indeed there appeared no end.

“Do ye mix with loaf or raw, Captain? The supervisor, he uses loaf—but our minister prefers the raw, whilk he says makes the malmiest drink.”

Grahame, from good-natured attention to the feelings of his officiously-kind landlady, fell upon the happy device of making his sherbet with both sorts of sugar; so that to her dying hour, in advising her customers, a liberty which she invariably took, in addition to her old precedents of the supervisor and the minister, she added, or “Captain Grahame de Bruce’s way—he aye, in this house, drank half-and-half.”

The jolly beverage being compounded to the taste of all parties interested, the ladies accepted their modest share, and, with a pledge to herself, Wolfe Grahame drank “a good husband to the landlady’s bonnie dochter.”

Jean stooped her head, and wet her flax with a pouting lip, the matron hemmed; and an agreeable affectation of demureness struggled with the smile which naturally overspread both their faces.

“It’s lang, Captain, to the saddling o’ a foal,”

quothr the landlady. “ Time eneuch for Jean to think o’ that daft nonsense—to be sure her looks are no her warst fau’t. But as I tell her often, ‘ Beauty’s but skin-deep, vertū goes to the bone.’ Nae doubt the great folk o’ Mossbrettles wad think their rantin Robin thrown away on a hostler-wife’s dochter. Set up the gudewife’s bit pride because her brither’s a placed Burgher minister ! Let them keep their lad, and I’ll mainteen my lass. If she had her mither’s spunk she wad ne’er look the airt he gangs—though I daur swear our gudschirs were much of a muchness.”

“ O, whisht now, mother !” implored Jean.

Grahame thought Robert Fennick a manly, active, fine-looking fellow, and Jean Bonalie a comely, decent, young woman ; but he was a most unfortunate person in family quarrels and delicate arrangements of all kinds ; so with (for him) an uncommon degree of prudence, instead of running headlong a tilt among the nonsensical squabbles of the Widow Bonalie and her neighbours, he kept perfectly quiet. He had in rural neighbourhoods and Irish country quarters, in affairs of precedence, often given mortal offence through sheer ignorance ; and he resolved to avoid this in future. He however paid Robert the compliment to which

he thought him entitled ; and Jean raised a moistened and grateful eye. The matron herself expressed no dissent ; and the conversation reverted to the safer channel of public events, and the many tales of fire, murder, and rapine, which every chance traveller from the opposite shores brought to the Crossgates of Caberax. With such bloody and tragic narratives, the Lass of Loch Ryan, and a few other ballads, which Jean sang with a decent degree of rustic coquetry, the hour passed ; and when all failed, the widow had recourse to the family library, which she lugged out, partly from the window-shelf, but principally from some shelves hung within the wood-enclosed family bed, accompanied by a verbal catalogue raisonnée.

“ This is ‘The Cloud—a bonnie cloud o’ stoure it rises’—and she rubbed the dusty volume upon her apron. It’s a’ about bluidy Mackingie, and Claver’s, and the persecuting times ; and this is ‘The Hind Let Loose ; and Peden’s Prophecies : he was a dreadfu’ divine—my gudedame ance heard him preach at the Kens, but the Mossbrettles folk think we are a’ publicans and sinners, and ignoramuses, but themselves. And this is Godly ‘Lizbeth West’s life—Take pattern by her, Jean, wham neither master nor mistress could keep from

travelling the country after ordinances ! And that's—let me see—George Buchanan, and Godly Samuel Rutherford's letters—a gay queer hand ; and that's Blind Harry, and Patie and Roger—I ance kenned their stories weel ;—but my memory is clean gone, sir, an it binna for the score o' the liquor when I ha'e companies ; and this is *Robbie Burns*, a fairing nae doubt frae Mossbrettles' Rob to our dochter. But ye seem to like that better ? We ne'er could make out that—It's a sealed book ! It was left by the Irish gentry in this house, just at the Windy Wodensday time—a weary time it was ! I was laid up o' Jean there—the roof was aff the house—the gentles were in it—the gude-man was camstairy—and the cow was calving. Na, if ye can make it out, just put it in your pouch. It is useless to us, e'en though we do get Rob Mossbrettles for our gudeson."

"Tuts, now mother !" said the girl once again.

It was a beautiful small copy of the "Jerusalem Delivered," in the original Italian, printed in Paris, and bearing the name of "Aileen O'Connor, Castle Connor," written in a delicate female hand. This was another gleam of that Will-o'-the-wisp, which had from time to time danced before Wolfe Grahame.

“ If I could exchange with you,” said Grahame ; and his gold piece was tendered, repulsed, and accepted in dumb shew ; for a smart knock came to the door, which was promptly answered by the dame’s—“ Wha’s there ? ”

This produced the expected response of “ A friend, gudewife—open the door.”

“ I open nae doors to friends that travel so late at e’en.”

“ But we have lost the road.”

“ Weel ye maun just find it again.”

“ There’s a lady and a gentleman both dropping wet.—There’s a good wife—open the dure.—We’ll pay ye handsomely and not trouble ye long. We’re for Mossbrettles, and want a lantern and direction.”

“ Oh, open mother ! ” implored Jean.

“ Haud your whisht !—If there be a lady let her speak :—what ken I how mony’s o’ your randy gang ? ”

A low muttering consultation was heard without. “ She’s a dumb lady—dafe and dumb.”

“ Deaf and dumb !—There comes nae dumb led-dies here. If ye’re for Mossbrettles haud round the snout o’ the Gallows’-hill—I daur say you have rubbed shouthers wi’ it afore now—then

through the slack, and that will take you to Kilwhannel—and syne keep straught foret, and”—

“Open the dure, ye bastc,” was again shouted forth in the angry accents of Kerry. “Shure we could with one keek lay it on its broad back, and never a thanks to ye. Is this a night to lave Christians hawling without, taking the cowl in their mouths?”

“Had you not better afford these poor travellers shelter. The night has indeed been horrible”, said Wolfe.

The dame, who appeared to enjoy the parley, nodded, as if to say, “Leave me to manage”—and screamed—“Christians ! Donaghadee Christians, nae doubt ?”—

“From Newton-Stewart then in truth—and never a word of a lie : little good it would do me with one so `cute as yourself, Mistress Bonalie.—So open the dure like a reasonable Christian sowl. Shure you know me, Bess Slattery. Many is the mug and pan I sowld ye, and ballad and boddice-lace for your purty girl ; and always found ye a reasonable landlady.”

The name of Bess Slattery operated like “Open Sesame” upon our hostess, who at once recognized that “wandering voice.” The door

cautiously gave way, and forward stalked the speaker, a tall, termagant, weather-beaten harridan, in a red cloak, and a rusty, crumpled, black silk, slouch-ed bonnet tied down under her chin with a red chequered handkerchief. She was followed by a squab, truculent looking fellow, on whose arm another gigantic female leaned, though, to say truth, she appeared to have small need of such support.

“Have ye company?” cried the first speaker, starting back on seeing Grahame. The persons behind instantly shrunk back into the shadow of the door; and the dumb female hastily adjusted her mantle in muffling folds about the lower part of her face. Already had Grahame recognized the helms-woman, who, in the midst of danger and alarm, had so dauntlessly steered the little skiff. These were the fugitives from Ireland; and with a strong feeling of compassion, which he took no time to analyze, he stepped forward, and begged the dripping strangers to approach the fire; and in detailing the brief history of the night, tacitly communicated the extent of what he supposed their danger.

The dumb person, as if feeling confidence from the frank courtesy of the stranger, stepped forward,

and the man retreated. With a look of intense anxiety she examined the young man's features ; but this vivacity of mien and gesture is common to those having her infirmity ; and Wolfe bore her glance with patience, and in his turn with more modesty regarded her. And hers was a form to invite scrutiny from the most indifferent spectator.

The uncommon stature, the haggard countenance, the wild, watchful, suspicious glance of a blood-shot hollow eye, staring through dishevelled black hair, the scanty wet drapery which clung around gaunt limbs of giant mould, and sent up a reeking steam, the free, bold, masculine attitudes, and unfeminine gait, composed a figure far more picturesque than engaging, and, in contrast, made even Bess Slattery, or Rouge-mantle, appear a soft and interesting person.

“ I must say, Bess, begging your pardon, that your dumb acquaintance there, is nae ee-sweet bird,” said the landlady. “ She is just as like to tak’ a purse as to gi’e ane, I’ll say that for her. She is mair like Pearlin Jean, or the ‘ Lady-wi’-the-lantern,’ or a witch-wife in some auld-warld tale, than an Irish Christian gentlewoman travelling on her lawfu’ occasions. Can she spae?—Lord pre-

serve's and keep us!—but she has an ee in her head, as dark and how as the vizzying hole in an auld castle postern door.—She surely does nae hear me?”

“One of my poor uncle's lang Irish madams” — thought Wolfe, with a smile—“How the good soul would stare!” and he began to feel some anxiety for the whole group taking their departure, as he was at no loss to perceive that the dumb gentlewoman had ears quick enough, and arms befitting.—The raised anxious look, the start on the slightest movement, the instinctive clutch, as if at a familiar weapon, all told one tale of alarm, danger, flight, and guilt. “Shure, and shure, I tould ye the lady was dumb,” said Rouge-mantle, sullenly, in reply to Widow Bonalie's query.—“Lend me a blast o' the cuttie-pipe; and get us a morsel of supper, and we'll be off for Mossbrettles.—Those who ask no questions will be told no lies. In the meanwhile have you ne'er a dhrop o' brandy?—Fill it up—a pint would not touch her when the blood is up.”

Both females swallowed a goodly portion of the ardent fluid, and Rouge-mantle made her reverences to Grahame; and, in doing so, gave a sudden start, which might have made another spill the

liquor. It, however, only impelled it more rapidly over her throat ; and then, with eager gesticulation and muttered Irish speech, she drew her dumb companion into the inner room.

“ I ken na what to mak’ o’ thac cattle”—whispered the widow to her first and favourite guest. “ Bess though a ramping wild limmer, has some good about her ; and I wad na be fain to tarry on this road-side and thraw her humour. On the other hand, the supervisor is so sharp about whom we harbour, as if poor victuallers wha have to pay stent and rent, tax and burden, can be chary o’ wha are their customers.”

“ Perhaps this is just a dumb woman,” said Grahame. “ They have always a wild look.”

“ Conscience ! she is a grusome anc !—But the want o’ the tongue must, to a woman body, be a sore bereavement. It is an unruly member no doubt ; but if I wanted my whirligig, I might lock the door and throw away the key—for frac morn to night I find use for it.—But whisht !”—

“ It is he, I tell you—I know him well. I have known him since he was cock-bird height,” Rouge-mantle was heard to say, in that clear audible whisper, which is more distinctly heard at a distance than the loudest tones of ordinary speech.

Some muttering in Irish followed, and Bess, returning to the kitchen, told the young girl, that the dumb lady wished to tell her her fortune, and the Captain his fortune, whichever chose to attend her first.

“ Let the Captain tak’ the first turn,” said Jean, with a frightened giggle; and in one minute Wolfe was in the inner apartment alone, by the side of the stranger.

The fugitive silently locked the door, and approaching him, said in an energetic voice, and with impassioned gesture. “ You know me—you know that I am—an Irishman—a fugitive—on whose head a price is set—proscribed, hunted, guilty, or so called. You are the kinsman of John de Bruce :—he was my friend !—I am in your power. Is it your wish to spare what the sword and the tempest have spared—the life which misery makes worthless ?—or to give me up to the blood-suckers ?—Think of it well. She who has lain in your bosom—my blood is blushing in her cheeks !”

Wolfe was too much overcome by the tumult of his feelings to reply, save by a broken exclamation of wonder and doubt.

“ You doubt my truth, then !” cried the stranger, impatiently stamping, his lip quivering in pas-

sion:—"Your doubts are destruction. Hark ! I hear the tread of their returning horses!—Let me at least die as I have lived—a man !" With a small dagger or stiletto, which had been concealed about his breast, he cut away the female weeds which disguised him, tore off his muffling frontlet and head-gear, and stood forth in the close-fitting green vestments which were then the uniform, the badge of rebellion—a man in very deed !

"Ay, a man every inch of him !" said Rouge-mantle, who claimed admission to announce, in eager whispers, the trampling of the horses, which his own quick ear had heard a second or two earlier. Her dark eyes flashed with momentary delight as she saw her companion restored to himself.

"What am I to believe ?" said Wolfe.

"Believe what you please, sir," returned the stranger, haughtily.

"Your tale is wild and improbable ; but it is as certain that your personal danger is great and imminent.—Tell me what I can do consistently with my honour as a man and a soldier, and command me."

"Lend me your military great-coat to cover this unhappy garb."

“ Then don’t call it so.—God bless the merry green !” said Rouge-mantle, with enthusiasm.

“ Pass me, if needful, for your friend travelling to, and not flying from Ireland. Yes, I will return. The lion should fall by the mouth of his den—nobly at bay—not skulking and doubling like the felon fox only to secure his own wretched life.”

“ Impossible !” replied Grahame. “ But take my coat,—my purse,—my horse.—Here is a way”—and he pulled up, by main strength, the rusty bolt which held to a small lattice. “ I pledge myself to hold the door against a hundred till you gain the open moors ; and there is room enough in Scotland.”

“ Then you *shall* go, O’Connor,” said Rouge-mantle.—“ Have I not purchased the right of speaking to you ?”

“ If you wish to prove your truth,” said Wolfe, “ try to wait for me near the rude obelisk, whence a path strikes from the high-way down to the shore ; and assuredly, within the hour, I will be with you for good or for evil.—Let me hope for good.”

The trampling sounded faster and nearer : Grahame rushed to the house-door, and, in a whisper, intimated to the landlady, the danger and impro-

priety of the dumb person being discovered on her premises. Meanwhile he locked the door inside, and put the key in his pocket. The butt end of a riding-whip thumped hollow against the door.

“Keep them in parley,” whispered Grahame, and flew back to the stranger.

“A barley there!” shouted the widow, taking her cue at once. “Irish scoun’reels! knocking on an honest widow-woman’s door, as if ye wad drive down the house.—If I see the blessed morning the supervisor shall hear o’ this assault and blattery.”

Wolfe found the fugitive already gone. Mistress Slattery was probably trained to rapid toilettes, for, in an inconceivably short space of time, she had thrown off her mantle and head-gear, torn a cap of the landlady’s from a curtain, flung all her fugitive friend’s discarded weeds about her own person, and, tucking this aggregation of wet drapery under her, squatted down in the chimney-corner, seized her labouring oar, smoked her pipe, and alternately sung that elegant and loyal ditty—

“Ye croppies of Dublin I bid ye take care,
For ye’re very well known by the cut of your hair.”

The man who appeared much less *au fait* to such movements, she ordered asleep at once.

“ Be about us !—and was it you a’ the time, supervisor ?” cried the widow, with well affected astonishment, opening her door.—“ To keep you cooling your cutes at my door !—But what will ye tak’ ? This is Captain de Bruce Grahame, bounce for Ireland to quell the croppies, and give us peace o’ them.”

The gentlemen exchanged salutations.

“ A damned scamper, Captain, I have had after the rebel rascals along shore there. I have had up all the household of Kilwhonnell and Mossbretles for examination.”

“ Od, ye was right to gar auld David say his carritch,” rejoined the widow, laughing. “ He likes weel to targe ither folk on theirs.”

“ There can be no doubt but their boat has gone to flinders. The herring-pond has saved government a half-crown tow. I must have acted valet to this scoundrel myself had we nibbed him.—It would have been a special-commission job.”

Grahame could not, at this instant, summon fortitude to make the inquiries which trembled on his tongue ; scarcely could he compose his countenance to a decent show of indifference.

“ Eh !—What—how is this ? Surely your lamb’s blood is still lying near your heart, Luckie,

if you keep your parlour window open in such weather"—and the officer whistled as he looked about keenly and suspiciously ; and in rushed the Sheriff mairies from the hallan.—“ Look about you there ! Sharp’s the word.—Sharp—sharp !”

“ The reek—the weary reek,” said the widow. “ It will not leave an ee in my head—and makes my bits o’ pearlins as yellow as a gule’s fit. Ye are ane o’ the trustees yoursel’, supervisor—and I must—and I will have that lum-head looked at.”

“ O ! is that it ? Well, let us see what you have got for us after our cool ride. What do you prefer, Captain Grahame ?—What has this lout brought you in his creels ?”—touching the soi-disant sleeper with the end of his whip, and probably taking him for a smuggler.

“ I have already ended my potations, sir,” said Grahame, rather haughtily.

“ O !—so—and in odd company enough too.”

“ I remain here for this night, and sit in this apartment—because it best suits my convenience,” continued Grahame, still in alt.

“ O ! no doubt—a jolly landlady—and a bonnie dochter ! Eh, Luckie—ha ! ha ! ha !”

“ Na, ye’re just the auld, daft, rantin’ doug, supervisor, wi’ pardon.—For I kenned the supervi-

sor last year, Captain, when he was but a simple gauger.—Ye may thank the Black-nebs for promotion—but let merit mount, say I ! Shall it be a bottle o' plottie, or a jug o' the auld Jamaica ? The Captain he drinks half-and-half :—And gang ye butt the house, honest folk ; gentlemen like nae strange cen upon them owre their liquor."

Rouge-mantle poked her sleeping friend, who enacted sundry well-executed awakening grunts, stretched his limbs, and growling curses followed her out.

Grahame, though not much enamoured of his chance-associate, upon second thoughts fancied it best to accept of the second proffer of civility ; and by way of balancing accounts, ordered in a supply of liquor for the supervisor's attendants, for whom a table was set out by the zealous widow in another corner of the apartment.

Gladly would Wolfe, in the confusion of his fermenting thoughts, have escaped the many tales and accounts of detections, suspicions, and arrests, with which this zealous partizan plied him during the discussion of their rum punch—yet every minute passed appeared like one gained to the fugitive, who would, he concluded, make a better use of

his time than in dallying on the seashore, merely to afford himself an explanation of enigmatical words.

A few minutes of conversation tended to reconcile the young man to the zealous official, against whom his proud heart had at first sight risen. He appeared more a sycophant than sordid, more a partisan than a knave, *staunch* rather than dishonest ; and, though there was about him a vulgar overbearing bustle, sufficiently offensive to our young man's taste, he felt that this officer was only doing his duty, in his own disagreeable way, at a period of great public agitation and peril.

The supervisor could give no precise information as to the rank or real name of the person supposed to have escaped from the Antrim coast, but that he was a rebel leader—" a d——d rebel."

" How many unhappy gentlemen were there in the same situation in our own country but a few years back," said Wolfe, " whose personal honour no one durst attain—the friends of the exiled Stuarts ! How many bitter enemies were there among honest Scotsmen to our own national *Union*—noble true-hearted fellows, that would nevertheless have *fought* against it over boots in blood ! I hope government is strong enough to give the

mad Irish time to come to their senses, or to clap a strait waistcoat on them, if gentler means won't do, till the paroxysm is over. In a better or a wiser cause, the enthusiasm, energy, and generosity displayed by some of these reckless partisans, would have immortalized them as martyrs of freedom and religion; for, after all, a Papist's faith may be as dear to him as a Protestant's is to us."

This was too general a view of the subject for the loyal supervisor; his official dignity fell, and his zeal rose as the punch ebbed apace. He replied by a succession of bumpers, and a volley of toasts of denunciation and execration, which he ordered all around him to drink; and, save Grahame, no one refused a test swallowed in so palatable a medium. "Coup it up, boys," exclaimed he. "We are on the public service; and the King—God bless him!—pays for all."

"Good night!" was at last exchanged between the comptators; the reckoning was discharged, and the horses were led forth. The sheriff-officers mounted and followed their warlike leader, now in tolerable glee. The landlady bent her ear till the trampling of the steeds was heard no longer; but even then it was in a whisper she addressed Grahame.

"It's me and mine that's beholden to you, Cap-

tain. "I would have lost my license but for yon friendly turn in getting aff the dumb quean, and making a guisard o' Bess—for she is a noted one."

"You have a tolerable ready wit yourself at a pinch, gudewife. That reek came not amiss."

"Then, Captain, it must surely be auld Clootie himsel' that helps a simple body out at a pinch; for I'm but an innocent duffie till I'm driven to an extremity; and then a city o' refuge will open in the mist in a really wonderfu' way."

"Or in the reek!" said Grahame, laughing. "But had this failed now, what would you have done?"

"Ou! just beflummed the gauger, and thought little sin, in some ither way. I'm sure I could not at this preceese moment tell ye an put my cen in pricks; but providence aye opens a door or twa o' deliverance to a straitened woman.—I'm only at a loss sometimes whilk to flee by."

"True," said Wolfe, smiling. "And Red-mantle is off too I presume. She also feels that,

"The mouse that has but one poor hole,
Can't be a mouse of any soul."

"The rampler quean is aff, and made me give her a lapful of bread and meat, a big whang o'

cheese, and weel on to a bottle of brandy, saying, the bold hussey, that you, Captain, had ordered her supper, and would pay a' charges, for getting your fortune spaed ; but I'm not going to extortion you."

Wolfe understood this delicate hint as it was meant, and carelessly replied—"Put it all in the bill, gudewife. You know the good King pays for all when soldiers and gaugers travel."

"Now if I thought that I would make small scruple—that eases my conscience clean. It's no little I gi'e *him*—so it's but gif-gaf, which keeps lang gude friends."

"But whither has Red-mantle gone?"

"Let her see to that—She darkens na my door again. She's thought little better—let me heark in your lug—than a spy atween the wild United Croppies and the Glasgow Black-nebs! I was a bit o' a democraw mysel' last year, and so was auld David Mossbrettles,—he, for the auld cause of *Kirk* and *Covenant*—me, for cheap tea and tobacco. While the Black-nebs wanted only the tea and sugar cheap, and a drap brandy at a reasonable rate, I was hand in glove wi' them ; and ga'e them ben the house to meet in, free o' a charge—save the natural corkage."

“And what did the supervisor say to this?” inquired Wolfe, who perceived that another hour must elapse before he could with safety keep his appointment, and cared not how time went.

“The supervisor!—When thae gentry clink me down in their lang parchment books I waver whiles yet in my principle. To think o’ taxing the very blessed light, whilk the Almighty sends down free frae His heavens through a puir widow’s window bole!”

“When I get into Parliament we shall have all this redressed,” said Wolfe, laughing.

“Lord’s sake! do so then; for it’s taxes makes democraws. They tax the tea-pot, and they tax the cuttie-pipe, and they tax the washing-tub, and they tax the window bole; and if I steek up the bole, they say, ‘Luckie, ye maun steek up your lum;’ and if I steek up my lum, they’ll say, ‘Luckie, ye maunna.’”—But here the honest woman pre-supposed a case so extreme, that her blushing daughter interfered with another—

“Houts, mother!”

“Ay! muckle need o’ you and the like o’ you in the Parliament, Captain. Johnnie Clydesdale, the weaver, telled me—and he was within one o’ being constitute a Deput to the British Convention

—that under a *sound* form of Government, folk might drink three times as muckle ale—and o' twice the straik o' maut."

"I think you almost qualified for a member of that sapient body yourself, gudewife."

"Hout awa', Captain!" rejoined the dame, with that equivocal smile, which pretending to hover between jest and earnest, manifestly inclines to the latter. "If the women-folks had the beard and the breeks, the brain might be forthcoming. But I was just giving you my ideas of Government anent taxation. With their universal sufferings and annual Parliaments I meddle not nor make not."

And these ideas we have recorded, literally as they were given, for the benefit of Chancellors of the Exchequer yet unborn.

"I see by your drumlie een, Captain, that ye are thinking mair on your bed than of poleeticks. I maun get ye a candle—and that's taxed and gauged too;—a sore matter that I cannot kill a wether, and make twa or three moulds and dips out o' the tallow, without a gauger at my lug! Mind ye that too in Parliament. But I'm nae bluidy Black-neb for a' that, Captain. When they took to speak o' burning houses, and cut-

ting' throats, and dividing lairds' lands, I was done o' the blackguards. And indeed I ne'er was for pulling down auld Geordie.—Take care o' the anker there i' the trance," said she, piloting the way to Wolfe's chamber.—"No, no—a King is a mensefu' thing in a country—he is like the gudeman in a house. You see how ilka loon puts upon a lone widow-woman, Captain. Had it been the Almighty's will to clothe me with a husband, as the blessed Apostle says, would these Irish rapparees have ventured to spuilzie on me as they did this night; and so fares o' a country without a King."

"Well, I am glad to hear that you are loyal at least," said Grahame, fancying himself—and with some reason—indebted to the supervisor's rum punch for Mrs. Bonalie's "Declaration of rights, and statement of grievances."—"Leave my boots, if you please,—I shall perhaps go off very early; and the first time that I have the honour of seeing his Majesty, I will surely tell him what a faithful and loyal subject he has in my kind hostess of the Crossgates of Caberax."

"Lord's sake! Captain, do sae, just for the joke ye ken," replied the Widow with glee. "I can say ony thing to Balquharn,—but the King

we ne'er saw. Now tell him I'm for setting him free o' Billy Pitt, and the *Bute* that hung sae lang at his nose—I saw the picture o' that in Balquharn—and bringing him down to Holyrood wi' the Queen and their bonnie family, where we could keep them for half the expense, and have something to look at for our siller. But a sound sleep to ye;—have ye plenty o' claes? And for ony sake, dinna think o' travelling on an empty stomach."

In a half hour afterwards, all in and about the little inn was as still as a churchyard at midnight, in the days when there were plenty of ghosts, but few resurrection men; and Wolfe glided through the same diamond-paned window which had served for the escape of the exile, about three hours before.

It was two hours beyond midnight when Wolfe walked forth to keep his mysterious tryst, scarcely expecting to find the stranger awaiting him, his mind tossed in a sea of doubt, and conjecture, and vague distracting thought. "Could the fugitive be the father of Elizabeth? Could he even be her near relative—or was this alleged only to influence his feelings and sympathies? Again—who could know of his marriage save through the

medium of the old woman, Monica Doran ; or through her who had sanctioned, and indeed enjoined the alliance ? Could he whose bearing and language bore the irresistible impress of truth, seek to deceive for the merely selfish object of personal safety ? Was he waiting now—or had he fled ? Such were some of the drifting thoughts that floated uppermost on the current of the young man's mind. There were others of deeper import from which at first he shrunk ; but, forced upon their consideration, his feelings were such as became his own heart, and did right to her to whom that heart was pledged.

“ Not less dear to me, my own noble Elizabeth, as the child of this unhappy outlaw, than if the daughter of de Bruce, my kinsman ! Ay, perchance, more dear—if that were possible,” was his thought ; and he walked forward more firmly, and in a few minutes, from behind the rude obelisk, commemorative of some local skirmish between Galwegian clans, beheld Rouge-mantle step out, and beckon him to follow her track.

The winds having raged their fill, had now sobbed themselves into the deepest peace. A breathless calm lay on the sleeping face of nature, on which nothing seemed alive save the tall figure,

and the taller fantastic shadow of his guide *crossing* the moonlight. Though the tempest was lulled, the heavy rolling sea, like some savage beast beaten back from its prey and growling in its retreat, still moaned in its internal agitation, uttering those heavy, monotonous, muffled sounds which for hours and days follow a furious storm. This muffled growling became louder. "Whither do you lead?" inquired Grahame of his athletic guide. She pointed to the shore, and pushed onward. After breasting a considerable green ascent, they plunged down sheer upon the beach, where the rocky angle of a small creek or inlet, of only a few yards in width, formed the boundary of a rustic cemetery, hanging upon the seaward slope, from the headland down to the ocean's margin. The broken surface of this neglected place of sepulture, was composed of turfy knolls intermixed with grey stones, weather-stained and covered with lichens, which had once probably been part of the neighbouring chapel of St. Bride, of which little other vestige now remained. A line of firm silversand formed the lower boundary; low ridges of rock tasselled with sea-weed shut in the sides; and cattle might be excluded by a natural fence of withered brackens and brambles which waved on the

summit ; where a few hermit bushes of sloe-thorn, hoary and shattered, intermingled their old grey limbs and tough roots with the evanescent shoots of a more ephemeral vegetation. A mariner who had escaped a watery grave, might have chosen to be laid here. A few mouldering tomb-stones, half sunk in the turf, and heaved up and swaying from their level, and a rude weather-tanned stone cross, were the chief mementoes of mortality :—the little green heaps had fallen in as the human dust had shrunk which lay beneath them.

On one of those weather-stained tomb-stones, under the shadow of a huge insulated mass of rock, Wolfe perceived the fugitive. He sat with his head resting on his hand, his elbow supported on his knee, in an attitude of melancholy contemplation, gazing out vacantly upon the crisp waves all glistening in the moonlight, and flowing onward to the sandy beach in a state as different from their late furious agitation, as was his calm and stern mood from the ecstasy of excitement in which Grahame had so lately beheld him.

Wolfe bowed as he approached, and the female drew back, having fulfilled her mission.

“ But a few hours back,” said the stranger, “ and you beheld me struggling, and all but gulph-

ed amid the coil of waves which are now rolling on so stilly, the slave of that wretched human instinct which compels us to struggle for the worthless life that has long been but as a sick dream—which, preserved with difficulty, already presses upon the heart like a dead cold load, which I could be glad to throw down forever—even here—and now. But what is all this to you?”

“ Pardon me, sir,” said Wolfe. “ If it be, as you have given me reason to believe, that you are closely related to one, so tenderly, so justly dear to me—can I be less than deeply interested in your fate, dark and perilous as it may be?”

“ ‘ If it be ?’—But this too must be borne. I am, young gentleman, the brother of your wife’s unhappy mother. I am in deadly jeopardy—that is nothing—I have plunged hundreds of faithful devoted wretches into peril as imminent. I have been betrayed by treachery—and *I have betrayed* many by my mad folly into a wild enterprize”—

“ If you already so clearly perceive the folly and injustice of your attempt,” interrupted Wolfe—

“ Injustice !—By heavens ! my purpose was as holy and as just, as right and wrong could make it !—right shamefully withheld—wrong cruelly inflicted—oppression, contumely, scorn, poured not on

me alone, but on all I ought to cherish ! I were a beast not to have felt—a coward not to have resisted ! But whither has the spirit of vengeance led me !—On yon miserable shore—blood—ay, faithful, generous, young blood, has already flowed to secure a way of escape for me. God !—God ! that it should be thus !” and he clenched his hands in an agony of despair. The female stepped forward with an anxious gesture, and again drew back in awe or fear ; and in a calmer voice he proceeded—“ I have still something to live for—and I must not cast away what has been so dearly purchased. You know the temper of this land.—Give me brief counsel how to reach the spot inhabited by Elizabeth—that place in which I once hoped to have seen in joy my poor sister. A friend expects me there—a *friend* !—and from thence I hope to pass to Hamburgh :—hope—why do men continue to be duped by the cheat ? But tell me, how, with safety to that poor woman who has sworn to guide me aright or perish, I may reach this Ernescraig ?”

Wolfe appeared to hesitate, really from inability to give instant counsel ; and, with a start of passionate impatience, the fugitive cried aloud—“ Have I then, in throwing myself upon your honour, made a rash confidence ? It boots not. Life

to me is a thing too worthless to repay withering suspicion, or cold-blooded calculations of man's faith or generosity. I may still cope with an open enemy, but I cannot stoop either to supplicate or to circumvent those whom I should find friends."

"My conduct has not merited this," said Grahame, with pride and feeling, "even while I held you a fugitive stranger, obnoxious, and perhaps justly so, to the prince whose sword I wear."

"You are right, young gentleman; bear with one whom suffering, even bodily suffering, has nearly driven mad. I have been skulking—yes, that is the very word—*skulking* on the shores of Antrim for six days, almost without sleep, or food, or shelter. But why do I say so, that poor woman has endured even more for me."

"Never mind the likes of me, O'Connor," said the female thus alluded to, very coolly. "Shure I'm used to the road night or day; and you will both ate and dhrink now ere you say another word. The young gentleman is true metal, I'll come bound. Ring him and try him; or if he should not, there's in Connaught, and nearer, will let him hear of it agen."

While this expostulation was in progress, Rouge-mantle spread one of Widow Bonalie's

snow-white towels upon a tomb-stone, and on this strange board arranged her pillage. She then urged the unfortunate gentleman to eat, while she drew back Grahame with something approaching to delicacy and gentleness.

“Lave him alone then.—Oh, Mother of glory ! to see a Scotch berrin-yard your hall, and a grave stone your board, O’Connor !—and he a prince in the land !—You saw him in the waters to-day—the fires had gone over him before then. “He did not break his fast or close his eye for three days. May the black curse and the burning, light upon, and hang about *him* and *his* that driv him to this !—and that is your own lady’s”—— She checked her communicative vein ; and again stepped forward, and pressed her services upon the fugitive, who tried to swallow a crust of bread, and seemed to choke upon it.

“Try the brandy first, O’Connor,” said the guide, coaxingly. “I have some experience—bless you.”

“She says truly, sir,” said Wolfe. “After your sufferings, privations, and incredible exertions, warmth and rest must be more grateful, and even more necessary than food. Would you trust your safety for a day to the hospitality of

the neighbouring farmer,—my neck should be your guarantee.”

“ No, No !—It cannot be. My blighting presence shall never again carry misery and death into any poor man’s dwelling.”

“ He speaks of the boy—and would we not have given up ten boys for you, O’Connor? Your own nurse’s childer ?”

Grahame respected the exile’s generous motive too much, to dissuade him from his own fixed purpose of entering no private dwelling.

“ I have gone too far already,” said he, “ in engaging your sympathy for a fate which it is become perilous even to guess at. Perhaps I may see my neice. I have credentials from her mother—her mother ! till the last week, I had not for nineteen years beheld Aileen ; and she was as the light of my eyes ! Just Heaven !—if Heaven there be that regards the doings of man—how, and when shall I learn to reverence your dealings ?”

Wolfe had never in his brief life witnessed sorrow so bitter.

“ We arraign the decrees of Heaven, and forget our own deservings”—was his quiet reply.

“ But Aileen ?—de Bruce ?—the young—the

happy,—the innocent ! What had they done to become the victims of a visitation so dark—so wrathful—so relentless ?” He sunk into thought ; and wrapping Wolfe’s military cloak around him, leaned his uncovered head against the rock, in an attitude strongly expressive of natural grace and dignity.

“ Is he not purty and gentale now ?” whispered Rouge-mantle, who assumed much more freedom with the young man, than with her own proud ally. “ Six feet two in his shoes—and they were seven boys of them, sonces of the ould O’Connor ; and Aileen the youngest, and the fairest, and the flower, and the curse :—and the sea got its part, and the sword got its part, and the grief as ever, had its own double portion. But did I not guide him well ?—Ay, and the blood will flow deeper, ere the axe which Fitzmaurice is whetting, fall on the proud neck of O’Connor !”

This new riddle was whispered through clenched teeth, in a tone of almost insane energy ; and before Wolfe could reply, Rouge-mantle was clambering over the grave-stones and rocks, on her way to the little inn, for such spoils from Grahame’s portmanteau as might be substituted

for the ill-boding green garb worn by the fugitive.

She returned in an incredibly short time ; and the exile changed his garb under the shelter of the block of rock, Rouge-mantle, at the same time, bidding him, “ never make no bones about her, as she would just turn her head seaward and take a blast o’ the ’baco pipe.”

In this attitude, something like common-sense appeared to have dawned upon her mind ; for she turned round saying—“ The boy is o’ the right, O’Connor :—I must part yez. I am—bless the mark !—as well known on the road as the *Port Dilly* ; and for as little good may be.”

“ She is quite right in this, sir. With this change of dress, and my horse, were you alone you may proceed unchallenged whither you will. To her who is dear to us both, you may make those disclosures which neither time nor perhaps inclination permits you to make to me. I am, indeed, more desirous to see you gone ere the day dawn, than for the gratification of my own anxious curiosity. I dare not even in writing allude to our rencontre. But tell her, that if I ever seemed to listen with coldness to any one, whose life is fed

with a portion of blood kindred to hers, to blame my condition and acquit my heart."

Grahame walked about to recover his composure. Rouge-mantle addressed a few words in Irish to O'Connor, and tossed his green garb far into the sea, though with evident reluctance. He gave her some money, and replied to her in the language she had used; and with many courtesies of her own peculiar kind, she went on her way.

The moon had almost sunk, the stars gleamed less vividly, and a faint pale streak of dawn was visible in the direction of the Antrim mountains. The fugitive gazed darkly in the direction of his country, with that yearning hopeless gaze of which only the exile knows all the bitterness; and stretched out his longing arms as if to clasp it to his heart.

"This is folly," said he, assuming a lighter tone than he had yet used. "I could play the woman here:" he slipped his arm through Grahame's. "Poor country!—a sadder heart never left thee,—a darker shadow never lowered over thee, since the hour when thy glorious green head first rose in pride above the waters, and thy God blessed thee, and saw that his work was good!—You think me a very fool, de Bruce, but that poor Ireland is *my* country. In this hour it is more—the birthplace

and the grave of noble hopes ; and, in the narrow space between them, what of toil, and suffering, and grief, and remorse, are huddled !—I cannot tell you my story to-night but I wish it were your destiny to carry your arms elsewhere.”

As he talked, the sullen roll of a single cannon-shot swung over the waters of the channel. He made a slight agitated movement, the nervous movement of one who has been long hunted, but is at last under no necessity of exercising self-command.

“’Tis the Carrickfergus signal-gun,” said Wolfe. “On a still night the booming of the evening gun may be heard on this coast.”

“’Tis to me the last voice of Ireland !” said the exile.

Wolfe saddled his good steed himself ; and a load seemed taken off his heart when the fugitive disappeared in the curves and bends of the road leading towards Ayr, just as day was breaking.

“Ye are a brave riser at night, Captain,” were the words with which Gideon saluted our young man’s ears next day, an hour after Widow Bonalie had arranged and re-arranged her guest’s breakfast table. The sun was high in the heavens—Wolfe sprung up, and his first thought was—“He must be twenty miles hence.”

A few half-crowns, judiciously administered, effectually stopped sundry gaps, which the disappearance of Saladin and certain other circumstances, had made in the Widow Bonalie's organ of inquisitiveness ; and she not only procured a hack-horse for Port-Patrick, but sent some of her friends forward with Wolfe's luggage, while he still dalled with Gideon over his breakfast. In requital of these civilities, he pledged himself, in set terms, never to pass her door ; and she, as a balance of courtesy, for the most "honourable day" she had seen since Balquharn and the road trustees had dined with her, implored that the gentlemen would not stir till they had tasted her "cherub."

"I see ye have forgotten me, Mr. Haliburton," said the widow, "and no wonder. I'm a changed woman ! Many is the lonely night has crept owre my head in that care-bed lair," pointing to her widowed couch, "since the death of Peter Bonalie. Ye ha'e forgotten me—auld springs gi'e nae price."

"Umph," quoth Gideon, as she went off—"I mind ye weel eneuch. She was thought to have spoken the poor man to dead, Wolfe. *Lingulata*—as we used to say at St. Andrews—a prating, clavering, lang-tongued woman. But oh ! man,

this is dour wark—this leave-taking. What am I to say to comfort poor Burd 'Lizbeth?"

While Grahame profoundly cogitated whether the hospitable intention of the widow, regarding a taste of her "cherub," had any special reference to the rosy lips of Jean; and with more of the sentiment and delicacy of a lover than the gallantry of his profession, demurred to parting with Elizabeth's last fond kiss on such slight grounds, or indeed on any grounds, the matron allayed his terrors by re-appearing with a fluted Dutch bottle, as long-necked as a heron, filled with home-made *shrub*.

In short there was no end to mutual civilities; but as "the best of friends," says the adage, "must part," Wolfe, with an abrupt adieu to his old friend, sprung into the saddle and galloped off.

"A fair gude-day, and a brave journey, C'aptain—and Lord's sake have a care o' the C'rop-pies!" bawled the Widow Bonalie.

Gideon and Jenny Geddes turned their rueful heads silently and sorrowfully homeward; but on the summit of the first knoll they stood, as if transfixed, while the young man remained in sight, and for some time afterwards.

"If it be Thy will, cover the young rash head

in the day of battle : And O ! strengthen and spare the soft heart that is hanging upon him—ay, e'en but owre fondly.”

Gideon and Jenny again moved slowly on—and, as has already been related, in due time reached the douce hamlet of the Sourholes in the fair strath of Oran.

CHAPTER XI.

A COUNTRY SUNDAY EVENING.

I'll give thy harp heroic theme,
And warm thee with a noble name---
Pour forth the glories of the Grahame.

Lady of the Lake.

THE garnish of Frisel's conversation had been duly served up in the parlour of Monkshaugh, as a desert, almost every day, for the last fifteen years, from the time that he acted as "gabby-post," till now that he was chief butler. On the day following Elizabeth's interview with Gideon, this innocent relish—the olives which gave zest, or the walnuts which gave race and richness, to Monkshaugh's moderate hebdomadal glass of old claret—was not forgotten. Not that Frisel was

permitted openly to stand still and discourse to his master—far from it—but there was a conventional understanding—the fire was to be made up—the hearth was to be swept—the beaufet was to be set in order ; and all this duly performed, gave ample time for table-talk.

“ I think Effie and you slipped Dr. Draunt the day, Francie.—Were ye at the Sourholes’ meeting? Was Mr. Haliburton ‘beautifu’ upon the myrrh,’ to-day? Has he gotten Daniel out from among the lions yet?”

The Whittret screwed up his humorous shrew-mouse visage to an expression of Sabbath solemnity, which became him about as well as a Geneva-band would a jackanape, and replied—“ There was only nine Sabbaths passed i’ the den—three owre the mouth ; four i’ the bottom ; and twa sprauchlin’ out. I remember when Captain Wolfe came home last year, after being away—was it twa or three years, Leddy ‘Lizbeth?—ye’ll mind? he said to me when I held his stirrup at the kirk stile—‘ Lord, Francie ! has Dr. Draunt not brought Joseph out of Egypt yet? He keeps a better hold than Potiphar’s wife ! A party of Abercrombie’s men would have had him here in the body eighteen months ago.”

“ Put nane o’ your Seceder gibes i’ the mouth o’ Captain Wolfe Grahame,” said the Laird, with Lilliputian dignity. “ But had ye a throng congregation, Francie? Wha a’ sat wi’ you the day? The auld Leddy o’ Hungeremout—did she venture frac hame?”

“ O, ay! She has gotten the auld cramesye mantle turned into a riding Joseph, rather scrimp in the tail—braw and lang i’ the waist though. The young gudeman was there too, wi’ the arnettie-dyed breeks I brought hame the litt for the ither week; and Miss Jenny Jamphrey o’ the Aiks appeared wi’ a red cockernony that’s a stranger to baith you and me, Laird, forbye a’ the Sourholes congregation. I kenna where she has gotten it.”

“ ’Lizabeth, will it be the yellow Devonshire slouch she brought frac the boarding-school she has gotten dyed, think ye, wi’ cudbear?” said the Laird, anxiously.

“ Not unlikely,” replied Elizabeth.

“ Some sheeps’ een casten between the arnettie nether-cleeding and the red cockernony, if I saw right owre auld Balwhirlie’s uplifted banner o’ a psalm book. The mistress sent down Saunders the goadsman, wi’ the mare for him, to the “ Grahame Arms,” yestreen. He rode hame as

blind, fou as a howlet, honest man ; but he was aye a douce kirk-gaun Christian on the Lord's day."

In this fashion was related all the tittle-tattle and scandal of the parish—what each person wore—what changes garments had undergone, whether of shape or colour—who had been "proclaimed"—who "rebuked"—whose child "christened"—who stole sly peeps of each other—who slept covertly—who snored aloud—who rode—who walked ; and how many, or how few halfpence the circulating ladle had shamed from the pockets of this penurious congregation.

"Lowrie Lingle's bairn was kirsened '*John Hutchen*'—set it up !" said Frisel. 'The Laird deigned no remark. "Weel it set him ! I thought ; and a gude wipe Mr. Gideon ga'e him.—'What d'ye ca' your bairn's name, Lowrie?' he routed aloud. Lowrie whispered ; and he routed again—'The bairn's name, my friends, is John Hurchcon !'—but a name has naething to do with deevine ordinance of baptism."

The Laird smiled, but tried to conceal the smile.

"But we had the grand young gentleman frae the *Whim*, too. I caught like the glint of a half-crown wi' the tail o' my ee, when Saunders Thrums brought the ladle frae the letterin where the younk-

er sat, round to our seat for Effie's farden.—She is casting her bread upon the waters, canny lass.—I kenna what the gentleman might be looking for, Leddly 'Lizbeth; but mony a gledge his ee ga'e round the kirk the day."

"Fine Sabbath cracks for the parlour o' Monks-haugh!" cried the Laird, in petty wrath, "what a souter ca'ed his bairn,—or how Mr. Hurchcon's guests gledge or gley either i' the Sourholes' meeting-house. It becomes me, Francie Frisel, as your master, to take rule o' you; so ye'll be pleased to gi'e me the text, and a note o' the sermon such as it was; and ha'e done wi' thae idle clavers ye delight in.—Nonsense gossip—most unsuitable to this day, and this presence."

"A noble discoorse," drawled Frisel, reassuming his solemn face, in sober earnest however; for in his time the form of religion was indispensable in Scotland—covenanted Scotland!—even where its power was wholly unfelt.—"I wish ye had been there, Laird—on thae words of Elijah, second Kings, iv. and 26—'*Is it well with the lad?*'—There was na a dry ee i' the congregation, Leddly 'Lizbeth. No one could miss the application to our family. There hasna been sic a day o' the gospel in the Sourholes, since Mr. Haliburton

preached his first great *Action* Sermon. Our Effie gaed clean aff i' the exies. Saunders 'Thrums the bedral and me had to carry her out, head and heels, and streck her on the minister's cauff-bed. Ay, Leddy 'Lizbeth ! there was a cōmfortable handling o' doctrine ! And aye the savoury owrecome—the Prophet's answer to the woman of Shunam—*'It shall be well.'*—Frisel mouthed this sentence in very good style ; and added, in his natural brisk tone, “Ye were sair missed, Laird. The discoorse, Mr. Gideon said, naturally unfolded itself into seven heads”——

“And ten horns belike,” cried Monkshaugh, with a face of scarlet, his little eyes scintillating with passion. “What business had the auld gowk's-head o' him with Captain Wolfe Grahame of Monkshaugh ? Was it not enough that the lang-winded Cameronian prayed the boddom out of my silver skillet, but he must preach us into a laughing-stock to the country-side ? Ay, 'Lizbeth, my love, ye may weel look as if ye knew not whether to laugh or greet. If my Lady 'Tamtallan should hear o't. It's no to be borne ! and it shall na be borne ! And, Maister Francis Frisel, if the parish kirk o' San Serf, or the non-juring chapel of Innervallie, cannot serve Mistress Feeb-

nie and you, as they do your master, ye'll take your change—I tell you that ! A bonnie tale in troth for thae Hurchcons, that a day o' fast and humiliation was held in the Sourhole's meeting, for the downfalling house o' Monkshaugh."

"The Hurchcons have ither tow on their rock," replied the Whittret, who well knew where the Laird winced, and could, at all times, readily revenge himself for such peccadilloes.

"What mean ye by other tow to spin, sirrah?"

"Ither tow to spin than minding Monkshaugh matters," said Frisel. "There's Lord Rantle-tree bidden and accept to a grand dinner for the 10th, when young Mr. John comes of age; and the next day comes my lady's *feast sham Peter*, and *ball-all-frisky* i' the policies o' the Whim. A' the bits o' young planted busses are to ha'e can'le-doups stuck on them, to let them be seen—for the Whim trimmer is scarce major yet, though Mr. John be—and Leddy 'Lizbeth, a' the red paper in Touchthebit's shop is clipped up into red roses. What think ye o' thae doings, Laird?" And the pert varlet darted off, leaving his wasp's sting vibrating in his victim.

"Come back ! Francie Frisel—and snuff thae candles.—What's this ye tell me? The Right

Honourable the Earl of Rantletree, his gracious Majesty's lieutenant for this county, Knight o' the Thistle, and Hereditary Spleuchan-bearer for Scotland—though the Lord Lyon questions the right—to mix and mell i' the dish wi' Meg Hurchcon's great-grandson? This beats a' print!"

This was putting the matter as strongly and as far back as possible.

"Ye ha'e the tale as cheap as I had it, Monks-haugh," said the respectful serving-man; and having now fully glutted his vengeance for the ungracious manner in which his "Note of the sermon" had been received, he went off to summon the cow-boy, the foot-boy, and the maid-servants, to the Sunday evening's lecture, while the Laird, in no very Christian humour, mused on what this portentous conjunction boded, thought of turning whig, and began to reckon on his fingers the number of votes which the united houses of de Bruce, Monkshaugh, and Kippencreeery Wester, could muster on an election pinch. The digits of the left hand made up the sum total of them.

"O, 'Lizbeth, but I wish ye had been a lad?" he said at last, recovering in some degree his composure—"and so does our strong-minded kinswoman, my Leddy Tamtallan; but I'll no say

that our friend Wolfe, as heir-male, would just have liked that."

"I wadna promise either!" whispered Frisel, gravely placing the volume of sermons, from which the Laird—who insisted on being priest, as well as prophet and king in his own family—was to select the lecture for the evening.

As a proper rebuke of Frisel's gossiping disposition, after long search and due deliberation, he handed to Elizabeth Blair's Sermon "*On curiosity concerning the affairs of others.*"

He next led her to a seat by the blazing fire, and had his own small snug *fauteuil* drawn up opposite. The Whittret placed a little table, and a footstool for the lady, snuffed the candles with a flourish, as if just fresh from the study of the Footman's Directory, and returned to where the household maidens were intrenched behind a high Japan screen—a boundary which, in imitation of the Rantletree family on those solemn occasions of Sunday-evening sermon-reading, divided the inner, from the outer-court worshippers—the porcelain clay—the gold dust—the pearl ashes of the earth, from its vulgar, every-day, clayey substances—"divided the wicked from the ungodly," Gideon was alleged to have said: but many ill-natured things were laid

upon him, of which he was guiltless. The Laird played the aristocrat only in screens.

About the middle of the discourse, it might have been perceived by more senses than one, that neither the eloquence of Dr. Blair, nor the voice of the charmer, had been able to keep any of the congregation awake, save the ever-restless Whittret. He, though ostensibly seated in the outer temple, was contriving to enjoy both a sight of a cheerful fire of “the Halbeath splint,” and to have a full view of all that was going on in the interior.

No one, we believe, ever yet pleaded guilty to the very natural and innocent crime of snoring—not even when caught in the act *red-hand*, or more properly *wide-mouth*. Monkshaugh, indeed, could not be supposed ever to snore; for he was one of those miserable or sublime persons, of whom there are a few in the world, who never sleep, by any chance, night nor day. Yet, we have said, the whole congregation, with the exception of the Whittret and the reader, were now snoring away, each after his kind. The nasal and guttural performance of the dairy damsel, was strong, high, loud, rumbling, ever and anon threatening suffocation till “up the lofty diapason rolled,” then

clearing off in a really wonderful way, as she appeared, as it were, quite at her ease calling in the cows. Effie's snore was low, croaking, and reedy, with occasional abrupt swells and grunts, as if she grumbled in her gizzard, and were restive even in her sleep. The Laird's slumberous breathing, gentle, snuffling, twitchy, and impeded with little breaks, was altogether a more gentlemanly thing, though a perfectly-decided snore nevertheless.

About the middle of the discourse, we have said, when Elizabeth was beginning to be both tired and mortified at her task, the lass of the dairy, after a long *gullering* sort of rolling snort, sunk into "a dying fall," so novel and intricate in its shakes and quavers, as at once to overcome the gravity of the Whittret, and startle the fair reader from her propriety. The Laird also started awake at the final guttural shake, which might indeed have awakened the dead. It, in fact, aroused the scared snorer herself; who, as Frisel popped something into her still-widely-distended mouth, forgetful alike of time and place, exclaimed—"Fh, Lord's sake, Francie!"

"It's a sore matter, Francie Frisel," said Monks-haugh, in a tone of mingled vexation and rebuke, secure himself in the impunity of the screen, "that

ye cannot keep up your heavy head, while your betters are condescending to instruct ye in your Sabbath duties. I'm sure Dr. Blair's discourses need not weary ony o' ye : He takes not long time to tell his mind, worthy man."

"Puir, fusionless, scrimpit claut o' sautless parritch," whispered Effie. "I wish I could sleep too, Francie ; for I cannot thole the 'legal twang,' as Mr. Gideon calls it, that rins through that man's preaching. Ye may c'en tell Mr. Haliburton I said it. I carena wha hears it." And Effie tossed her head in testimony ; while Frisel tipped her a knowing wink, in a style which she did not above half-approve.

"Be done with your muttering, there !" cried Monkshaugh, hastily ; "and go ye on with the lecture, 'Lizbeth, my love ; and pardon the disrespect o' thae heavy-headed creatures. They are no like us in their dull sleepy intellectuals. It cannot be supposed.—See ye keep your een open there, or ye'se get neither drink nor supper by ordinary this night," said he, looking behind the screen, and speaking in a sharp quick tone.—"Or if ye will sleep ye surely needna snore. I wonder, 'Lizbeth, how folk can snore !"

“ I wonder mair they tak’ the trouble o’ snoring wha never sleep at a’,” said Frisel, quietly.

“ Hold your peace there, Francie Frisel ! ’Lizabeth, my love, go on—ye’ll soon get through your duty.”

Elizabeth, a good deal scandalized at the whole of this well-intended solemnity, quietly resumed her reading. She read from the volume, and beautifully she read—

“ *What is that to thee, follow thou me.* What this man or that man does ; how he employs his time ; what use he makes”——

“ Ay, halt there, ’Lizabeth, my dear. Ye hear that, Francie Frisel,” said the Laird, turning his head in the direction of the corner of the screen, where Frisel was advantageously posted. “ *What is’t to thee* how many *balls-al frisko*, or *fetes-champ Peter*, John Hurchcon’s wife gi’es. Verily, verily, it is easier, sirs, (now solemnly addressing the whole unseen congregation,) for a camel, as the Apostle James says, to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. But these are deep mysteries ; and ye ha’e gotten enough for this night’s diet. Close the book, ’Lizabeth my darling.—Make gude use, you

there, sirs, of what ye have heard. Effie, I trust ye have something comfortable for the Sabbath night's supper. It was aye the custom in Monkshaugh, 'Lizbeth, after the Sabbath evening's duty was decently owre, to gi'e something better than ordinary to the domestics.—Francie, fauld by the Japan screen there; and lay the sermon book where ye'll easily find it again next Sunday.—'Lizbeth, my love, did ye put in a mark? Ye must take a glass of warm sherry negus; for I'm sure your throat's sair wi' such a holding forth. But auld serious customs must now be revived and maintained in auld families. This is no a time to slacken in discipline. I liked no' to talk before servants. I behoove, indeed, at all times, to keep Master Frisel at the staff's end. He is weel enough in his ain place, when I keep in his horns—nane better. But, 'Lizbeth, what think ye o' Lord Rantletree, the main branch o' a' the Rantletrees, skinking over and banqueting wi' Meg Hurcheon's grandson?"

Elizabeth dexterously avoided the question by replying—"You never yet told me the real story of this famous personage—this witch-wife—but of course I cannot trouble you with this on Sunday."

"Muckle Meg o' Monkshaugh! Ye shall not

need to long for that story, 'Lizabeth. Put me in mind the morn."

In an hour afterwards, peace and slumber was over the old mansion, from kitchen to garret. Elizabeth, in her orisons, fondly remembered him who never, never was absent from her thoughts. The Laird dreamed of plans to mortify Harletillum ; and Effie, on her pillow, devised a quite new mode of attack upon the heart of honest Gideon.

CHAPTER XII.

MISTAKES OF A NIGHT.

He pricked his maggot, and touched him in the tender point ; then he broke out into a violent passion.

Tule of a Tub.

NEXT morning, when Elizabeth entered the breakfast parlour, she was astonished at the apparition of Monkshaugh, still in his robe-de-chambre, seated at his old-fashioned ebony writing desk, instead of watching the silver tea-pot at the head of the board—an affair that on ordinary occasions he would not yield to woman, much less to “man of woman born.” What short of the death of his nephew, or the demolition of the “Dresden Set,” might have occasioned this phenomenon, Elizabeth could not guess.

The ceremonial of the breakfast was curtailed of

its fair proportions by at least a half hour ; and again the Laird wrote—re-wrote—erased—leaned his head aside in cogitation—smiled Malvolio-like over a happy hit—formed his lips in curves, as if tracing in imagination the characters of the “ thoughts that burned,” which his fingers were forming—in short, enacted the author conscious of his own success as naturally as possible. Elizabeth knew of no sin of this kind that had ever been charged on Monkshaugh, save a stanza and a half added to an old Jacobite song.

Half-laughing at her own curiosity, Elizabeth said at last—“ My dear sir, you appear so delighted with your subject—verse or prose?—may I inquire?”

“ Prose, 'Lizabeth, gude, plain, pithy prose, that will crack i' the deafest side o' John Hurcheon's head. But make me a clean, nice-nibbed pen—I seldomer wield the instrument than perhaps I should do. I'm grown a lazy gude-for-naething, 'Lizabeth—and pick me a slip of the best gilt note paper—not card paper now. Ay—that will do. But be ye patient, lass—ye shall hear. Fules and bairns, ye ken, should not see half-done wark—though that's scarce a civil speech to you.”

Elizabeth perceived that though he thus chat-

ted, his mind was absent, rapt, absolutely in the clouds.

“The gold note seal, my dear—wi’ the Grahame Arms.

“O the Grahames, the gallant Grahames,
Wad the gallant Grahames but stand by me.”

He hummed the stanza; and then said, “Ne’er ye marry a man with a vulgar packman-like surname, ‘Lizbeth—Or the note seal wi’ the de Bruce crest—how would that motto do?—‘*Fuimus*’—*We have been*. Truly, ‘Lizbeth, my dear, this I fear, after a’, may be the most befitting our present state.”

Thus delighted with himself, and *havering*, as Frisel said, without bounds or limits, Monkshaugh maundered on, till a guest was announced as under way from the fords of Oran.

This was the only dangerous point from which the gentility of Monkshaugh could be surprised at unawares; and a line of telegraphs had long been established between it and the mansion. The ploughman in the distant fields shouted to the thrasher—the thrasher communicated his information to Hughoc the cow-boy—the cow-boy, who, in good weather, took his post on the roof of

the barn, like a warder on an ancient beacon-hill, *legged* down to The Place to alarm Frisel ; and, by this good management, the Laird was, at all seasons, enabled to change his wig, examine the larder, if, peradventure, the coming visiter might be entitled to the honours of the sittings, and make Elizabeth clear away her elegant confusion of work, books, and flowers, from her own corner, in the deep window.

Before the rider from the fords of Oran arrived, however, Mr. Haliburton appeared, splashing through the miry loanings. The worthy man, on this morning, had scarcely finished his wonted liberal allowance of oatmeal-porridge and butter-milk, or, as he more correctly termed it, *sour-milk*, snatching, at a side glance, about ten lines of “The Marrow” between every tremendous spoonful, when Mistress Effie Fechnie was announced to him.

“Something the matter wi’ the puir bairn,” thought Gideon in alarm. “I was overly strict with her.—She is of a gentle loving nature, and but young yet, and will grow wiser in time ;” and, under this impression, he anxiously interrogated Effie.

“I am laith to say,” groaned that managing

maiden, “ that this is a matter of deeper concernment than bodily ailments—c’en a soul’s health, minister—a case I behooved to lay before ye o’ grievous persecution, for it’s nae better, condemning me, lang fed wi’ sappy and savoury Secession doctrine, to the legal blush o’ an auld-kirk corbie ; and warned to flit my service if I dinna quit sitting under your banner.” And Effie melted into such tears “ as does an allegory on the banks of the Nile.” “ I’m sure I’m ready, minister, to take up my cross, leave father and mother, if I had them, and follow you—yea, cleave to ye,”—and there rose a little sob.

This was attacking Gideon on his two weak sides, if we may be allowed the expression—his tenderness for the sex, his principles as a Cameronian, and his pride as a spiritual teacher.

“ The Laird o’ Monkshaugh astonishes myself, Effie.—I’ll till him this minute, and lay before him what he has to answer for, in straitening the tender Consciences that eat his bread”—and Gideon rose in zeal.

“ Eh, Gude sake na !” cried Effie, in a very natural manner, much alarmed at this straightforward proceeding.

“ Let your yea be yea—your nay, nay, Effie,” said Gideon, solemnly.—“ But here comes puir Francie—on the same errand belike.”

“ My errand is to bid you to dinner with the Laird and the young leddy, Mr. Gideon.—Heartily glad will baith be of your company.—Compliments to you, conjunk and several ; and a private word frae Leddy 'Lizbeth that ye must come.”

“ And no a word to say o' your ain strait, my wee man, anent this prelatie cantrap o' forcing ye to gi'e up your kirk.”

Frisel perceived in a moment how the land lay, and how much Effie was in his power ; and managed to bear off both Laird and lady, ensuring peace for this time among all parties, and a good supper or two to himself from the grateful fair, whose reputation lay so much in his power.

“ So ye really think, Francie, he meant nae-thing,” said Effie ; and while she still zealously avouched her readiness to “ give up all,” she expressed thankfulness that she was not yet called on to suffer for conscience' sake, and went off alone, after several vain attempts to get Frisel along with her.

“ I wish Effie's zeal may be altogether according to knowledge,” said Gideon. “ But what shall

we say—are not the simple o' the earth like her, often chosen to confound men of understanding?"

So lightly on his throne sat Monkshaugh's bosom's lord on this morning, that it was his own proposition to invite Gideon over to dinner. "That was a smart wipe he gave Lowrie Lingle after all," said he to Elizabeth. "And he meant weel by his discourse about Wolfe."

And when the worthy apostle arrived, the Laird, in high glee, quizzed and joked on the tender subject of Essie Fechnie's ominous *strecking* on the chaff-bed on the former day. Elizabeth worked, and chatted, and smiled; and the "grand gentleman on a horse," whom Hughoc had announced, arrived at last in the guise of a smart, good-looking, English groom, well-mounted, and splendidly equipped in the Harletillum livery.

"I was expecting this arrival," said the Laird, with the imposing *àir* of a highland seer. "But what business has John Hurcheon with brown faced up wi' yellow—the house o' Argyle wear brown and yellow—or wi' red, or blue, or grey, or green—or what's the use of a Lyon Office in Scotland?"

"The puir man is *fey*," muttered Gideon.

"Ye'll see that man and horse be decently re-

freshed, Francie. Take down the siller tass full o' brandy from the beaufet there. Ye see, 'Lizabeth, my love," continued Monkshaugh, softening his exulting tone to the gravity and modesty fitted for the denouement of the drama of the morning—"I foresaw that as Wolfe—poor fellow, for my sake it was too—had patched up a truce wi' John Hurcheon, we must no doubt be invited, Mr. Gideon, to swell their peacock train and glorification i' the county, on the 10th proximo. Now as my lazy habits since I forsook the bar"—

"The Laird has his black advocate's gown no a flee the waur. It's just a picture for trimmings and purflings, Mr. Gideon."

"Hold your peace, Francie!—makes me no the ready penman I have been. I thought it best to be prepared—a-hem!" and clearing his throat he read with due emphasis.

"Mr. Robert Grahame of Monkshaugh and Kippencreeery Wester, and the Honourable Miss Elizabeth de Bruce, return compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Hurcheon of Harletillum—for ilka carle's son maun be Mr. Something, of some place, nowadays, Mr. Haliburton; Esquires, no less, o' places wad ill graze a goose and her gosling, as ye may read in the Caledonian Mercury—Apply to

John Janders, Esquire, o' Blashieburn'—or 'Saunders Staig, Esquire, o' Stickinhalls'—bits o' pendicles whilk, I'll gi'e ye my word as a gentleman, Mr. Gideon, the brandanes and cotter-bodies that ate my forebears' livery meal, wadna have planted their lang kale in.—And then again we have, on such a day o' such a month—'David Baldwicks, Esquire, Candlemaker, married on Miss Georgina, second dochter of Mr. George Speulbane, Flesher'—and in due season—'The lady of David Baldwicks, Esquire, is,' nac doubt, 'safely delivered of a son:' and, if we live as lang, we may be sure to meet David again, honest man, either i' the bankrupt gazette or the obituary—as, 'David Baldwicks, Esquire, *senior*, justly and sincerely regretted by a numerous circle of friends.'—And for reading this truckering and trafficking between hides and tallow, a gentleman of birth and name, Mr. Haliberton, must pay his money, or give up the auldest family newspaper in Scotland. As my Leddy Tamtallan says—'It's enough to put being born and dying out o' fashion.'"

"The puir man *is* fey," thought Gideon once again, as the Laird, waxing warm and witty, thus revelled in parenthesis.

"Pray proceed with your note," said Elizabeth,

who anticipated some very absurd scene, and was undecidedly hovering between her love for Monkshaugh and her perception of the ludicrous.

Again the Laird commenced with fresh glee, fresh breath, and fresh anticipations of triumph.

“ ‘Mr. Robert Grahame of Monkshaugh and Kippencreech Wester, and the Honourable Miss Elizabeth de Bruce of that ilk, return compliments’—Now I don’t quite like the word *return*, ‘Lizbeth—‘ to Mr. and Mrs. Hurchcon of Harlettillum, and for reasons which it would be unpolite in Mr. Grahame to condescend upon more particularly, beg to offer apologies for not being present at Mr. Hurchcon’s grand dinner of the 10th proximo ; and are sorry that the same causes must operate against Mrs. Hurchcon’s *fete champ peter*’—(or is it *petre*, ‘Lizbeth?)—‘ and *ball al fresco*, to be given on the following day.

“ ‘ Monkshaugh House, December 4, 17—. ’ ”

“ Will that do, ‘Lizbeth?—Short and pithy—a bit of a tickler, Mr. Gideon.” Monkshaugh lighted his taper, seized his wax, and made a strong, neat, deep impression of the Grahame arms on the note. Elizabeth stole to his side—“ But, my dear sir, we are not yet”——

“ Ye are for accepting then, Miss de Bruce,

like all young fools to whom a junketting is mair, as my lady Tamtallan says, than the honour and dignity o' the line o' de Bruce." The Laird spoke wrathfully. "Ye maun follow Lord Rantletree's example—worship the golden calf set up on the Coal-heugh moor, and do John Hurcheon's bidding."

"So far from accepting, that I trust no invitation will be sent to me. I, at least, have had none yet. Time enough, you know you want to tell me ten years ago, in another delicate case, for young ladies to refuse when they are asked."

Off went the Laird's bell, and in rushed the Whittret.—"Bring Leddy 'Lizbeth that card John Hurcheon's groom has brought."

"No card, sir—all word o' mouth.—'Mrs. Hurcheon's compliments, and would be obligated, besides payment, for another poullie hen, and a few more pairs of chickens and pigeons, as ye are famous for your pou'try; and would like the bill sent over, that it might be settled by the housekeeper before the family go to town.' The groom chap, English Tom, is damning like a dragoon at them for sending him their hen-wife messages.—But Lord's sake, Monkshaugh, ye surely are no going to lift your hand to me!"

“Bill!—send my bill!—poullie hens and ehickens!” shouted the Laird.—“The impudent quean, as if I were a hen-wife, or an egg-cadger like her grandfather; or a huxtry-wife dealing in fat poutry for my bread! because I compelled Effie Fechnie, my housekeeper, against her judgment and will, to lend the pack some fat fowls when they sent to borrow of us. This comes of a neighbourly deed done to the ill-bred beggarly race of them. Effie Fechnie!—Effie Fechnie!” and clapping a hand to each side of his head, as if to prevent it from bursting open at this indignity; or, what seemed more likely, to keep his periwig from flying off, the deeply insulted Laird of Monkshaugh ran to his chamber.

“I thought the puir man was *fey*, ’Lizbeth,” said Gideon.

“You might, with equal justice, have thought the woman ill-bred and insolent,” returned Elizabeth. She threw the Laird’s epistolary labours into the fire; and, turning to Frisel, ordered him to give the groom a half-crown and dismiss him. “There was no message from Mr. Grahame to Mrs. Hutchen of Harletillum.”

Frisel was one of those imaginative persons who

never either carried a message or told a story verbatim in their lives.

“Tell your mistress, English Tom, that Mr. Grahame, of Monkshaugh, says, he has not begun the cadger-trade yet ; though, in looking round this country, he has, like Lord Rantletree, great reason to think it a thriving calling.”

Gideon was left to cool his heels for a quarter of an hour, before Frisel, always excited when mischief was going forward, returned to the parlour.

“The Laird has ta'en a *weid*,” said he. He is a' in a *grue*, shaking like an aspen, puir bod-die.”

“A weid !—help thee Francie !” returned Gideon, smiling quietly.—“It's only women boddies that tak' weids when they bear their bairns.”

“O, de'il-my-care !—The Laird's in a weid, I tell ye. Leddy 'Lizabeth is drapping double brandy for him on a knoblock o' sugar. Effie is making a het-drink—and I am sent to look after you.”

“Undeniably, my wee man, the Laird has mair o' a woman's turn about him—I aye thought that—than is just common to our gender,” said Gideon, shaking his head, gravely and thoughtfully, his medical or physical doubts beginning to thicken before the strong averments of the Whittret.—“But this

is graith I cannot yoke, Francie," he continued, " Sae I had better stoyte hame-owre—my bit business can stand."

" Never a fit. Sit ye down, minister," said the Whittret, equally prompt to do the honours or discourtesies of his master's house.—" Leddy 'Lizabeth will put a' thae megrims to the rout in ten minutes. Ye wadna leave Effie and us in our calamity; and as gude a leg o' mutton on the broche as ever trotted through the Path o' Condie?—Do ye no smell it? It's Dr. Draunt has the keen back-scent where a fat dinner is i' the wind. We gi'e him his dinner here for ordinary on the 'Tuesday. You haly-wark folk aye like your throats oiled, Mr. Gideon. The Laird was for putting off the cock-a-leekie till the morn for his sake, but canny Effie wadna hear o't. If the bye-word haulds—'clever at meat, clever at wark'—we need not, I'm sure, complain o' him that guides the pastoral crook o' this parish."

" If ye think to pleasure me by decrying a minister of the Kirk o' Scotland, e'en wi' a' its defilements, as a belly-god and a gormandeezer, Francie Frisel, I wad rede ye to know"—

" Decry !" interrupted the impudent varlet.—
" Far frae it, Mr. Haliburton. If the proverb be

true, that ‘ Heaven sends meat, but the de’il cooks,* ought we not the rather to be thankfu’ that we have an established clergy, regularly appointed in every parish, to buffet wi’ the Enemy, and gainsay his unsavoury purposes touching our creature-comforts.”

“ Francie—Francie, ye’re a great little loonie !” said Gideon, shaking his fist over the elfin man, and grinning in recovered good-humour ; for Gideon, after all, was human—and a Cameronian preacher.

While Frisel thus kept Gideon in play, Elizabeth, with gentle address, was soothing the wounded feelings and ruffled pride of Monkshaugh ; and she at last half succeeded in convincing him, that dismissing the messenger in silence was much more consistent with his true dignity, than all those forms and modes of revenging the galling insult which his passion dictated. The poor old man was at length quite subdued by her entreaties.

“ Ye say Wolfe would do this, ’Lizbeth ? I trust ye may be right. I’m no the man some of the auld Monkshaughs were. I was but a weakly babie ; and maybe a wee thought spoiled by an owre fond mother. Wolfe has had to rough it out, poor lad ; and it may be the better for him.

To him it's left to redeem the name of the Grahames of Monkshaugh. I'm but draff and sand to the auld gallant Grahames. I ken that: but I'm o' their blood—and thae Hurcheens,”—and he tossed himself back on his pillow.

“Forget them sir,” said Elizabeth, far more affected by this candour and humility, than she had ever been by his vaunts and glories.

“No!—but I'll be clear o' them, if I should go round the parish wi' an aumous pock. Do ye think the gudewives would be ony thing free o' an aumous to the puir auld Laird of Monkshaugh, whose forebears have reigned sac lang among them?”

Here was vanity at work again. Elizabeth made no reply. She was at all times rather deficient, and perhaps disdainful, of that pardonable address which soothes the peevish mood of a harmless vanity. Her compliments were not to be *fished* by either the naked hook or alluring bait.

“Go down to Gideon, my dear,” said the Laird. “He is but a rough-spun Christian—but he has cast his glamour over Wolfe Grahame; and were it but a messan-cur that Wolfe liked, it should be welcome for his sake to Monkshaugh house.”

“Then I hope you will like me also, for his sake,” said Elizabeth, slightly blushing.

“I like you for your own, 'Lizbeth, my dear, even if ye were not John de Bruce's child. To be sure, 'Lizbeth, there was once a passing talk of me taking a leddy. Both my ever honoured mother and the Laddy Tamtallan thought o' Miss Nicky Murra', as a desirable party; but it never went farther than a tea-drinking in the auld Countess o' Eglintoun's. I own, I am something particular in my taste o' a fine woman's shapes. . Now Miss Nicky, though a reigning toast and belle, was what the bucks of those days called kipper-hippet, and so”——

“Well, well,” interrupted Elizabeth, laughing, but reddening more deeply than before—since you are resolved to crush all female hope, pray put your cruelty to sleep for an hour before dinner.” And she arranged the pillows and coverlet, closed the window shutters, and departed.

Mistress Effie, whether in requital of Mr. Gideon's oratorical exertions of the previous day, or from a determination to attack the worthy man through the stomach as well as the heart, and thus not leave him one organ wherewith to defend himself, or from both motives combined, produced an

admirable dinner. Monkshaugh arose composed in spirit—Corporal Fugal came down to The Place to inquire for his patron Wolfe, and was ordered his dinner. “There was mirth in the kitchen, and mirth in the hall.” The cock-a-leekie spoke a language of which even Gideon understood the spirit. Some bottles of old home-brewed ale, bright as amber and strong as a giant, were quaffed to the health of the “young Captain” in the kitchen. A bottle of excellent old wine, though rather thrown away on Mr. Haliburton, nevertheless, did its gentle spiriting in the parlour. There was one hearty pledge to the “lad over the water;” and the tempest of the morning subsided into a tranquil evening.

Seated between the elders, in the glowing twilight of the parlour fire, Elizabeth just touching her guitar, as if to keep herself in countenance, sung first in order, “The Gallant Grahames,” and afterwards many old lays of love and Scottish chivalry. She even at length warmed, melted, and betrayed Gideon into the dangerous heresy of helping her out with broken lines, supplying verses, and reciting fragments which she had never before heard. Gideon had one mark of strong poetical feeling, a tenacious regard of that form of

words which had first fastened on his memory. He could have knocked down, or something near it, the author of even an evident emendation on his old favourites. He was quite as tenacious of music as words; and had moreover a very true ear.

At Gideon's request—for he was the most absent of men—Elizabeth chanted the fine old ballad of “Fair Annie,” the deserted wife—her heart throbbing violently as she sung—

“Put ribbons on your head, Annie,
Put roses in your shoon;
And try ye to look maiden-like,
Though maiden ye be nane.”

“I may put ribbons in my hair,
And roses in my shoon;
But how can I look maiden-like,
When maiden I am nane.”

“Ye are out there, Burd 'Lizbeth,” said Gideon, when she concluded.

“I have at least good authority.”

“I care no' a fig for authority.—Ye miss the best verses i' the ditty,”—and like Aubrey's ghost, “with a most melodious twang,” he sung some stanzas quite new to Elizabeth.

“Lie yont—lie yont, my new-made bride,
Lie yont a bit frae me;
I downa hear my Annie weep,
For a' the gear ye ha'e,” &c. &c.

“ I shall adopt these lines,” said Elizabeth ; and as he looked at her, all at once her peculiar situation flashed on his mind. Her deep blushes, and downcast eyes, and quivering voice, shewed him the cruelty of his request for this ballad.

“ I was born an idiot, and I’ll die an idiot !” he muttered—and he turned to Monkshaugh. “ Thae blethers o’ auld rhymes will stick by a man when the memory of better things has perished. When I was a laddie about my father’s fire-side i’ the Kens o’ Gallowa’, a muirland farmer—nae boast o’ birth, Monkshaugh, though our forebears—and that *is* boast—kenned baith how to daur and to suffer in Scotland’s evil day :—Ay, and to seal a noble testimony with their precious blood.”

“ And you acquired your store of fine old ballads there ?” said Elizabeth ; for the conversation was verging to a ticklish point underneath this roof, and she wished to lead it back.

“ E’en there, ’Lizabeth. We had a fashion o’ crooning that auld-warld nonsense, about the ingle neuk on a winter’s fore-night, or on the braes in a sunny summer day : Nonsense and waur ; feeding the vanity and corruption of the natural heart—Brave gallants coming branking down the brae, in

disguise, nae doubt ; and forgatherin' wi' lasses at a buchtin fauld, and marrying and making led-dies o' them, or giving them fifty guineas to pay their nourrice fee. It puts black mischief in innocent maidens' heads. I kenned a lass ance that could have turned 'The Cowden Knowes—' 'The bonnie, bonnie broom'—amaist as sweetly as yoursel', Burd 'Lizbeth. 'That auld ditty o' hers—

“ I ride single on my saddle,
Since our braw foresters are a' wed away,”

wad ha'e made the tears rap down a man's cheek. But I'm an auld fule, Monkshaugh ! Nae fules like us that's auld fules,” cried Gideon, blushing up to the verge of his wig. He drew his horny hand across his eyes, and abruptly snapped the silver chord of recollection, which held him to old songs, early loves, and the hills of Galloway.

The Laird rung the bell ; and lights were brought in. How many soft and lovely twilight visions have broad day-light and candle-light the sin of banishing ! Gideon had been seduced into looking back upon Sodom, and the fair cities of the plain, and might, at this hour, have whispered with the poet—

“ My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is inly stirred ;
For the same sound is in mine ears
Which in those days I heard”—

feeling anew, as it were, the united blandishments of nature, poetry, and the bonnie lass of Galloway take high possession of his heart ; but the candles sent all soft ideas a-trooping to the shades and labyrinths of metaphysics and controversial divinity.

Elizabeth had long known that Gideon possessed a genial, as well as an honest, and a single heart ; but sundry little stolen glimpses at unawares, led her to suspect that it might once have been a tender one also, rough as was the rind. She felt that strong and very common propensity of having a peep into that strange and complicated machine the human heart, under its softer manifestations ; and tried, once more, to lead back the discourse. But the chord was, as we have said, snapped, and all her efforts were vain.

“ How I should like to see your hills of Galloway ! ” she said, and repeated—

“ O, let me wander a’ my days
Where heather blooms and moor-cocks crow,
Then dig my grave, and lay my banes
Amang the hills o’ Gallowa’.”

“ Brave lines, Burd `Lizabeth ! and so at your age might I ha’e said. But now a stranger and a pilgrim, as all our fathers were, what matters it ? ”

so where the auld battered trunk falls, there let it lie." •

Gideon rose to depart. Elizabeth hung on his arm for an instant, and tried to coax him to remain all night, promising to sing to him without her simple instrument ; for he strongly disliked all instruments of music.

"Na, na, my bairn—that's my leddy"—looking at Monkshaugh, who liked no such freedoms as he used—"as godly Samuel Rutherford says, 'Hae' binks are sliddery seats for gospel ministers,'—I must gang back to the auld black wa's yonder. I sometimes think my path in the wilderness but a lanely ane ; but it's better ordered I daursay—I daursay ? Sinner that I am what am I saying ? Is it no' in His hands where all things are weel-ordered and sure."—He turned to the Laird and said quietly—"Monkshaugh, if it wadna be troublesome, I would like a private word with you."

"Some bit favour to ask, honest man," whispered Monkshaugh as he passed. "I would be laith to refuse him."

Elizabeth's conscious heart throbbed with mingled feelings, as the two elders retired together to the arched stone passage, or "pend ha'," as it was called.

“Speak freely, Mr. Haliburton,” said Monks-haugh, in tones of gracious encouragement.—“Though I ken my place on proper occasion, I have aye a civil answer and a patient ear, for a decent man like you.”

Gideon was too much absorbed to observe a degree of condescension which would probably have exceeded his gratitude.—“I was under great concernment yon morning to see you take sae to heart the scouterin’ o’ your bit pipkin ; and so”—here he fumbled in the abysses of his huge side pockets—“as I happened, in passing through Glenaap, to forgather wi’ that runagate quean that was ance Corporal Fugal’s wife, I coft this ;”—and he displayed a small tin vessel, resplendent with scarlet lacker and metallic foil, ornamented with something courtesy might have called the Union flower, an entwined thistle and rose, and over all, the scroll and blazon “TO ROBERT.”

“Just a wonder of art,” continued Gideon, turning it admiringly round ;—“and a greater wonder I had the sense to think on it ; (smiling complacently) ; for in matters of compliment, or in what a house needs, I’m, I acknowledge, but an ignoramus to you Laird. And to give the quean her due, she herself put it into my thick head.—

‘There is what the Laird o’ Monkshaugh wad give gowld for,’ quoth she. But I got it for less siller, Mr. Grahame,” whispered Gideon; “so mak’ nae scruples about accepting it.”

This was a day in which the fates seemed to have conspired against the dignity of the house of Monkshaugh. Red as a turkey cock, his distended nostrils blowing and sniffing in wrath, the Laird burst forth—“’Lizabeth de Bruce, d’ye hear this?—Ye uncivil person—is it under my father’s roof ye offer *me* your tinkler-tackle, in place of an utensil, Mr. Gideon Haliburton, that a’ the kitchen gear that ever was amang the whigs o’ Gallo-wa’ could not purchase, Mr. Gideon Haliburton!”

Honest Gideon was taken quite aback by this unlooked for turn given to his very first act of address and “considerateness.” He was too much discomfited to reply all at once. At length he got out—“I meant ye nae incivility, Laird o’ Monkshaugh, far frae it—I wish to gi’e honour where honour is due—and what is fairly meant should be fairly ta’en.”

And Gideon stoutly strode away followed by Elizabeth, who again hung on his arm, coaxing him to return as the night was dark, tempestuous, and rainy.—“It’s c’en owre true the wee man

says, I'm no fit to guide mysel', 'Lizbeth. 'The Lord look on me and help me ! For since I lost Marion Hervey, I'm a puir, helpless, handless man. Let me gang, my dear,—let me pass. I wash my hands o' hussey-skep. 'The session may just do wi' me as they like, touching the matter of conjugality. I thought—and mainly for your sake too, 'Lizbeth ; I was na, I shame to own it, altogether single-hearted in this affair—I thought as I would like to be seeing how ye prospered baith in spirituals and temporals, it was best to make that prinkie hoddie some bit propine for the skaith done his pannikin yon morning, as I might have brought a Flanders-babie to yoursel' when at the synod lang syne, and you a bairn. 'That *thing*'—and he threw it down in contempt—"cost me a crown o' white siller ; and lo !"—

"It's no worth five bawbies," added Frisel.—Elizabeth retired hearing Monkshaugh's voice ; and Frisel ran after the minister up into the avenue, bawling—"Ye maun be ruled, Mr. Gideon ; I'll be down to the Sourholes the morn. Keep up your heart ! Discreet elderly maidens are no ill to woo. She's an auld crock ewe, as I said, o' your ain fauld too.—It gangs to my heart though to be art or part in putting ye under the harrows ; for

thou art an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile !” Thus did Frisel apostrophize the fugitive.

Monkshaugh would soon have forgiven Mr. Gideon, and even condemned himself for his unkind reception of a courtesy, the absurdity of which arose from mere simplicity, had he not overheard the unlucky phrase “prinkie boddie”—a thing to be resented by him more deeply than a much more serious injury ; so Elizabeth, though she could have better spared a more polished man, considered it prudent to let the matter cool for a few days, before she attempted Gideon’s restoration to favour.

But the minister was not yet fairly off. A sudden swell of the Earnesraig burn prevented him from crossing to the Sourholes ; and when the Monkshaugh ploughman came home, late in the evening, from getting a horse shod at Castleburn, it was reported that the disconsolate preacher was still warming himself by the smithy-fire, waiting the falling of the waters. Monkshaugh’s hospitality was questioned in the hamlet—at least so the Whittret represented it. “ They say ye ask the Sourholes’ minister to his dinner, Monkshaugh, and stick him wi’ the spit—leaving him to beek his shins at a smiddy-fire half the night.”

Monkshaugh would not yet see Gideon, but he

went early to bed himself, and made Elizabeth write a note urging the minister to return to The Place to take his bed. This note, backed by sundry rather questionable allegations of Frisel's, once more brought the honest man down to Monkshaugh.

"Give him his supper, Francie," said the Laird. "Let him want for nothing; but be sure to bring away the candle. It's a wonder to me he does not set himself in a lowe every night he gangs to rest."

Three minutes were allowed Gideon to invest himself in an old flowered-silk dressing gown of Monkshaugh's, which almost reached his knees, an affair of grandeur which he strenuously declined having any thing to do with, till Effie came up stairs herself, and insisted on carrying off his wet garments to the kitchen fire, when sheer modesty compelled him to avail himself in haste of what he called the "goodly raiment." He was then left in darkness to his prayers and meditations.

Notwithstanding their perpetually sparring, with gloves and often without them, many a comfortable supper had Effie and the Whittret enjoyed, *tete-a-tete*, during the last seven years. They were engaged in this social meal once again, a

flask of good ale washing down a broiled bone, when the shrill, exulting cry of a female voice was heard, and loudly and vehemently that of Gideon exclaiming—"In the name of the Lord, be ye mortal or fiend, let go your grips, or I'll do ye a mischief!"

Gideon's chamber door was instantly thrown open by the valiant and nimble Frisel, who had snatched the kitchen light and run off on the first alarm; but instead of Effie's favourite cat, which he expected to find, lo! a female! her feet off the ground, who, with the grasp of the *Maiden*, clasped in close embrace the struggling preacher.

"What's this! what's this!" cried Frisel with loud laughter.—"O minister! minister!—Keep back there, Effie!—This is no a sight for maidens like you. Here is a tale for the session!"

"As I am a living sinner, Francie Frisel—but why should I asseverate to the scorner! I ken nae mair, Effie, how that puir demented creature, Jacky Pingle, has darned hersel' in my chalmer—in my very bed I believe—than the sackless new born babe. She has some crazy conceit o' her being my sweetheart—as if I were an Adonis for women to fa' in love wi'"—

"Your sweetheart, ye auld grey tram! I am

the Laird o' Monkshaugh's ain winsome leddy"—said the poor vagrant lunatic ; for such had our old acquaintance, Miss Jacobina Pingle, long been.

" A bonnie scene, minister," Frisel went on with his peculiar expression of elvish mirth and malice, " under the Laird of Monkshaugh's very roof !"

" Hold your scoffing tongue, ye profane giber," cried Effie, generously coming to the assistance of the rueful preacher.—" Weel it becomes you to jeer and gleek at His master's servant !—And you, ye daft limmer—to darn yoursel' in ony decent widow gentleman's chalmers to bring scandal on his gude name—gac down the stair wi' ye, or I shall drive ye head foremost !"

This zeal of obstreperous virtue was too much for Gideon's humane feelings, great as was his cause of controversy with Jacobina on this night. " Be tenty and gentle wi' her, Effie.—Where can the puir thing gang to at this late hour ?—for, Oh ! sirs, she has few to think of her, or to see till her."

" I'll see till her !" cried Effie. " I'll see her kept under lock and padlock for this night, and tramped aff to Edinburgh the morn wi' Michie Snailswain, the Castleburn carrier. I'm sure we

ha'e haverils enow in our ain country-side, though the Edinburgh folks keep theirs at hame—at least till the session rise."

"It's little I mind you, ye dour din carlin!" replied Jacobina, twisting her mouth,—“or you either, ye grusome carle. D'ye mind yon night, when the murdered leddy's smoke-wraith rose high and thin i' the flames o' C'ambuskenneth Lodge?”

Mr. Gideon appeared a little uneasy. “Well, well, if ye are to slight me that gate, Jacky, I must e'en draw up wi' Effie here;” and he grinned with the expression of face which was his nearest approach to humour—while Effie, overcome as if by a “summer cloud,” writhed in smiles indescribable, and levelled at him at once the artillery of the “gleg grey ee,” and the blank shot of the white one.

During this dialogue, Frisel was busied in glancing at papers of which Jacobina always carried about a large wallet full, obtained by many furtive expedients.

“Let me hand you to the chamber of dais, my leddy,” said he, gracefully extending his hand. “This is no a fit place for your station and dignity.”

“But I'll carry my contract mysel', Francie

Frisel." And she seized the papers with one hand, while the fingers of the other were daintily laid on the arm of her gentleman usher; and away she moved in sweeps and ambling curves to the distant attic in which Effie locked her up, determined that the Minister should not a second time be exposed to scandal on Jacobina's account. Frisel had meanwhile coaxed her out of her papers.

That restless spirit of curiosity which was poor Jacobina's original infirmity, had gradually reached its present morbid excess. Her ancient neighbour, Deacon Daigh, who, after her illness, was exceedingly kind to her, had some years before this given Gideon the whole philosophy of her case. "She aye slighted the staff of life," he said; "the bite o' white bread; and dabbled three times a day at the jaup o' Bohea, and that naturally raised the vapours; and the vapours they flew to her brain in her lonely maidenhood, and that set the tongue a whirling. And ye ken yoursel', Mr. Gideon, for that there was little need; but Lord's sake dinna let my wisht be heard! Then she ne'er was weel after the burning o' Cambuskenneth Lodge, grew a Tolbooth whig—na, na! the Grey-friars' Kirk could na serve her—and yoked to her Bible like a daft folk. Now her puir frail wits couldna

stand the strength o' the Word—the Bread o' Life, as it is beautifully called.”

Upon this statement Gideon brought poor Jacobina to the Sourholes, where he entertained her, if not in the best, yet in the kindest manner, till her wandering malady set her a roaming again. In connexion with her malady, and subservient to that love of matrimony and finery which are common to female lunatics, was a desire to appropriate by violence or theft whatever written papers she saw, under a diseased apprehension that they were her marriage settlements, and vouchers of a West-India fortune, of which Harletillum had cheated her. Her suspicions were not however always confined to him. Wherever two persons were talking together, Jacobina's head was poked between them; and in this unhappy way she wandered over the country wherever her mood led, but always on the outlook for papers. She had been at the Whim on this day; and, with the cunning peculiar to her malady, had abstracted a whole heap of documents, with which she forthwith proceeded to Monkshaugh, satisfied that all her dowry matters were arranged at last. Dread of her determined enemy Ellic Fechnic, who was mortally jealous of her, both in respect of Gideon's affection, and of

certain rags of old silk gowns, which the Laird sometimes bestowed on the mad woman, 'led the frail brain of Jacobina to concert the plan of concealment in, as she supposed, her betrothed's chamber.

Whatever the abstracted papers contained of rare or important, the Whittret took care to keep to himself for this night.

Mr. Gideon, after a restless night, was off by the cock-crow ; and so greatly amused was Monks-haugh by the nocturnal adventure, which at breakfast F'risel related with his usual latitude of embellishment, that he almost forgave the " prinkie boddie," and bestowed another old gown, or what she called a bridal suit, on poor Jacobina.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SPAEWIFE.

I know each lane and every alley green,
Dingle or bushy dell of this wild wood ;
And every bosky bourne.

MILTON.

She amongst ladies would their fortunes read
Out of their hands, and merry leasings tell.

CHAUCER.

A FEW days after the visit of Gideon, Frisel, who was the organ of all intelligence and of all mischief in Monkshaugh's family, announced that the "illustrious house of Harletillum," as he styled it, were to hold a high field-day in the Kirk of San Serf on the morrow, a day appointed for a National Fast. Intimation to this effect had been sent to the Rev. Dr. Draunt, together with an invitation to dine at the Whim after the Fast-day's service. This was during the most alarming period of the progress of French arms and French prin-

ciples. "To stem the torrent," Lord Rantletree and the Rantletree family had lately begun to appear at church. Mr. Hutchen, equally loyal, with "a great stake in the country," and equally pledged by the devotion of "life and fortune" "to strengthen the hands of government," also felt the necessity of attending church on the day of the "King's Fast," and henceforth to send his wife and the carriage once a day at all times. Mr. Hutchen was not a man likely to serve Heaven, save on good grounds, so every body thought it necessary to follow his example. A public appearance on the Fast-day, was, indeed, a test of a good disposition towards the government at this agitating and suspicious crisis.

Monkshaugh was convinced that, in such a crisis, the eyes of Lord Rantletree, and of the whole county, must be fixed upon himself. "To fight or flee"—to face these splendours of the *parvenu* folks, or veil his diminished head, was his private cogitation. Frisel disdained flight—his voice was still for war; and it was, at all times, a powerful organ in this family.

"We have no carriage, Francie, for Luddy 'Lizabeth."

"Ye have the roan powney; the Luddy 'Liz-

beth has little Titty Annie that Captain Wolfe presented to her, which she likes better than any carriage in the county : the creature follows her about and whinnies after her like a Christian soul."

"Titania is the brute's name, I have often told ye : but, as ye ken that I hate a parade and vain-glorious paraffling, what if the Monkshaugh family should countenance Mr. Gideon, by giving him a day's hearing, and taking a bite of bread and cheese with him atween sermons, as we have no carriage?"

"Mr. Gideon holds no preaching. He says he has nae brow o' Fasts o' man's makin' ; he sees nae scripture warrant for King's Fasts—but clean the reverse."

"He is an old, tup-headed, cross-cut pin of the sanctuary.—What can we do then, Francie?"

"Ye'll surely no play fugie before John Hurchcon and his chariots, Monkshaugh?"

"Fugie, sir ! me fugie before John Hurchcon ! I was for facing the pack down at once ; but the Lady 'Lizboth represented to me, that our devotions might be more quietly gone about, and with less disturbance in a smaller congregation."

The Laird's mind was already wandering over the church, marshalling his household forces, so as

best to body forth and support the dignity of the house of Monkshaugh. The front gallery seat, hung with worm-eaten crimson cloth, and garnished with tattered escutcheons, was the de Bruce family seat. Here, in his mind's eye, he posted Elizabeth, with Fugal and the domestics of Ernescraig in the rear—members of Gideon's flock, no doubt, but to be pressed into the service on this day, in spite of all late acts for Toleration and Freedom of worship. The Monkshaugh seat occupied one side of the gallery, and exactly opposite was the pew of the “Whim family,” as they now began to be sometimes called.

It was arranged that Effie Feehnie, Baby Strang, the dairy-maid, and the Whittret, were to take post behind the Laird, with Hughoc, the flax-en-headed cow-boy, now thrust (on trial) by main force into an old livery-coat of Frisel's, much too small for him everywhere. A dram to Johnnie Jow, the kirk officer, procured a loan of the church keys; and a piece of fresh green baize, borrowed from the parlour carpet, was secretly nailed to the Monkshaugh seat, in place of the black frieze rags which had fluttered there since the decease of the “ever-honoured leddy of Kippencreeery Wester.”

The evening previous to the grand exhibition,

Elizabeth, glad to escape from the confusion which ever intervenes between the acting of a dreadful thing and its first idea, rode towards Ernescraig Tower, on the earnest solicitation of Monkshaugh, in quest of a white beaver hat, adorned with plentiful plumage of the same hue ; which, with her grey camblet riding habit, would, he was convinced, have a much more dashing effect in a country church on a Fast-day, than the green cloak and rustic straw bonnet which she usually wore.

The Whittret, her running footman, had, in passing, slipped into the hamlet privately, to arrange a merry social party for the evening of the Fast-day ; and, midway between the Tower of Ernescraig and Castleburn, Elizabeth first perceived that she was alone, the shades of a raw, misty, December afternoon falling fast around her. The outline of the surrounding hills swelled to the gigantic, and then became faint and more faint, shadowy and undistinguishable. The Tower was next lost in the thickening obscurity.

Abrupt precipices rose on one hand, and the wooded ravine or dell, of which Fugal was lord paramount and the sole inhabitant, sunk sheer on the other

side of the Pech's Path, which she now traced. Personal fear was a stranger to her bosom.' Violence was never dreamt of in a country where the greatest crimes known were, the Pitbauchlic colliers' *spearing* a few salmon in the Oran, or cutting a few osier twigs in the dean. From subduing feelings of another kind, Elizabeth's mind was not quite so exempt, for—

Many a legend peopling the dark woods,
Nourished imagination in her youth.

There is an indescribable, wild, reckless pleasure in, as it were, throwing the reins to fate, and plunging boldly on in darkness through an unknown and dangerous way, which for the time sets one above its power. But every stone and bush on this path was familiar to Elizabeth and her little steed; and though she pressed on with unabated confidence, she felt little of the excitement of an unknown danger, but was quite at liberty to keep on the outlook for ghosts, shadows, and all shapeless and undefined causes of alarm.

A shrill peculiar whistle issuing from the ravine, and running far and clear along the braes, was scarcely cause of alarm; yet Titania pricked up her ears, and Elizabeth just touched the bridle

as the signal was answered from above her path. The first alarm probably came from Fugal's hut ; or it might be the signal of some rural sportsman who had lost his companion in the woods.

A few paces onward, and before Elizabeth had recovered from this trifling alarm, a tall female figure started from the brushwood that ran along the ledge of the ravine, and stood in her path. This startled her Lilliputian steed, which would have bounded off had not the woman with a strong arm seized the rein.

“ Don't be alarmed, lady,” said this formidable apparition. “ It is only a poor travelling merchant, who would be glad to supply you with pins, needles, buttons, bodkins, ballads, &c.”—and, as she rhymed over the catalogue of her wares, she threw aside the long dark mantle in which she was wrapped, and discovered her basket, still however firmly grasping the bridle.

“ This is no hour nor place for bargaining, besides I have no money with me. I must pass on.” And Elizabeth drew her bridle.

“ Then take what you will for love, fair lady.”

“ I want nothing of you. Quit my bridle—or you shall repent of this.”

“ Repentance is for the sinner, lady. But

surely so pretty a lady would like her fortune told. Cross my hand with a tester, and learn the will of the Fates—or if you have no current coin, sure you have some token-bit, a sixpence broken for true love, or some ring or brooch. Trinket of yours were worth gold to me. Try your pockets.”

“Wretched woman, is your design to rob?” cried Elizabeth, her spirit rising above her fears. “Follow me whither I am going, and if you need assistance it shall be largely given you; but—I am neither to be menaced nor scared.”

“Then this be my guerdon,” replied the woman, twisting her bold fingers into a ringlet of hair, which escaping from its confinement played on Elizabeth’s shoulder.

“She is mad poor creature!” was now Elizabeth’s thought; and her fears took a different direction. “She is distracted: had her purpose been to rob—one woman rob another!—she would not have dallied thus.”

Elizabeth looked round in vain for her lagging squire. The shades of evening fell thicker—it was almost dark—no object could now be discerned at the distance of ten yards—and the bold black

eye of the woman flared out of the darkness like a thing of evil omen.

“ This tress is but poor guerdon,” said Elizabeth, recoiling from giving as a ransom to a mad vagrant a gift which, trifling as it was, yet formed a part of herself. “ Take this instead”—and she presented a small garnet hoop-ring of trifling value, save that it bore the initials of some of Monkshaugh’s peerless grand-aunts. It was eagerly seized.

“ Good night—I *must* pass on—I shall be late !” said Elizabeth.

“ Not till I have earned my hire.”—And the woman took the ungloved hand of Elizabeth, and held it firmly. Again the same shrill whistle rung along the rocks—but there was no answering signal. Elizabeth’s terror became extreme—a sick, blood-curdling agony was at her heart. “ For Heaven’s sake quit my hand,” she exclaimed, while she struggled to get free.

“ The mavis sings late to-night,” was the reply ; and unheeding the efforts of Elizabeth, the vagrant held strong possession of her hand, affecting to peruse its lines.

“ For the love of Heaven let me pass, woman ! and take all I can give you.”

“What do you fear, cowardly girl?” cried the vagrant in an angry and threatening tone. “There spoke the craven blood of Fitzmaurice.”

“She is only mad after all,” thought Elizabeth, again drawing her breath with greater freedom. And, with a feeble attempt to smile, she said—“I long to hear my fortune. Does he whom I love, love me; or does he love at all?”——“Gracious Heaven! am I to be held here all night in a mad woman’s grasp!” was her secret thought, as she mentally denounced against the Whittret all the pains and penalties of maiming, dismemberment, slaying, and burning,—“held here all night the sport of a mad woman’s fantasy—or reserved for something yet worse!—I am afraid, goodwife,” she said in a soothing tone, “that the night is now too dark to permit you to read the cross-lines of my fortune; or this little palm too narrow to afford verge for great fortunes to crowd into.”

“He whom you love, is a soldier,” said the sybil.

“Good!—but does he love me? That you know were better worth hearing.”

“Does the lark love the free blue sky—the butterfly, the flower—the vine, to drink the sun-light—the new-dropt lamb, the milk of its dam—the

traveller of the desert, to hear the rush of waters?—so sure does Wolfe Grahame love you.”

Elizabeth started, and drew back on her saddle. The name acted as a momentary spell; and she involuntarily yielded to the weakness of exclaiming, while again she bent eagerly forward—“What of *him*—is it well with him?—Have *you* ever seen him?”

The vagrant drew herself up to the extreme height of her tall figure; and tossing from her the hand she had hitherto grasped, said with energy—“And has the maiden no thought save for the bright eye and the ruddy cheek of youth?—no thought—no heart—no yearning for the unhappy mother, who has suffered and travailed for her?”

“Alas!” said Elizabeth, in a subdued and mournful voice, bending her head on her bosom, “The blessing of a mother’s love is denied to me—or Heaven is my witness how fondly I could prize it!”

Again the same shrill, impatient, peculiar whistle sounded through the glade—and was at this time returned by the vagrant as strongly and shrilly as ever the voice of a man gave out such sounds. Titania, holding probably the orthodox

opinion of Monkshaugh, that “crawling hens and whistling maidens were ne’er canny,” pricked up her ears and bounded off on the way to her stable, with a violence that might have dislodged a less dexterous rider from the saddle. Not so the fair equestrian, whom Corporal Fugal had taught the *menage*; and who, in fact, had early learned to manage her horse without saddle, stirrup, rein, or any thing of the kind.

“To thy speed, Titania,” said she, caressing the neck of the gentle and spirited little creature. “We must try the gallop for it, as greater heroes have done.”

“Stay, cowardly girl!—not a hair of your head will be injured,” shouted the vagrant. “Life and death are on my message!”—Elizabeth reined in her palfrey; and now heard other voices as if in angry dispute. This was decisive of the matter. Once more she put Titania to her speed; and in three minutes was down upon the hamlet of Castleburn.

Straggling lights were already twinkling in the little casements, shedding reflected cheerfulness through the gloom which showers of hail and sleet had increased into thickest night. In the obscur-

ity she could just discern the stately figure of Corporal Fugal, who, whistling aloud the bold brave air of "Johnnie Cope," wended homeward to his lonely cabin in the woods. Elizabeth reined in her steed, and gave the challenge in form—"Who advances?"

Fugal's natural movement on all occasions of surprise, was, to "make ready." He first made this involuntary movement, and then his military obeisances, while he exclaimed—"Is it your honour, Ma-dame 'Lizbeth, all alone under cloud of night? But our ladies thought nothin' of a gallop of thirty miles by moonlight in Flanders. For that part of it, the moon rises almost every night in Flanders."

"And in romances, I believe," said Elizabeth. "But as Scotland is not quite so highly favoured; and as I, Fugal, though a pupil of yours, am by no means so brave as your ladies were in Flanders, I shall thank you to walk by my bridle to Monks-haugh. That varlet, Frisel, has deserted me somewhere in the Path."

"Oh, my back, and my breast, and baith my twa sides!" groaned the very man she spoke of, as if from behind a low turf enclosure. "I'm murdered—I'm killed—I'm a gone mutton, I'u

gal Scrymmager, if ye cannot give me a touch of your famous Riga balsam."

"What is the matter?" cried Elizabeth, hastily.—"Are we all bewitched to-night?"

"Not unlike, my leddy," said the Whittret, crawling forward through a breach of the enclosure, and bent nearly double.—"If I'm no' thrashed I ken mysel'—mauled within an inch of my bare life by an outlandish quean as lang as Clackmannan Tower, as I gaed whistling up the Path after ye : but if ye're safe, my leddy, my moan is made.—I'll fire the dean woods but I'll be revenged on her though."

"Who could she be?"

"De'il kens!—they are his cherubs I warrant them. At least a dozen o' them set on me. It would not ha'e been ae lang quean that should have cowed me, Fugal."

"Tinkers, perhaps?"

"Na, na ! no tinklers. The horners are an orderly weel-ruled race, that were never kenned to lay violent hands on any living thing, save a feathered creature, in all the four hill-side parishes.—Have ye heard o' the fowmarte stealing ony o' the Hungeremout folk's geese lately, Fugal?"

"I had no tidings," said Fugal.

“No, no, our ain travelling friends will no’ be this way till after Doune Fair. This must be some Irish hallanshakers, that will soon ruin and knock up the honest tinkler trade in our countryside.”

“I rather think,” said Fugal, “I seen a horner-woman cowering among the bushes this afternoon; but as I heard they held a drowning match yesterday at the Linns o’ Cleuch I gave no heed.”

“A drowning match?” said Elizabeth.

“Yes, Ma-dame ’Lizbeth, drowning an ould tinkler,” replied Fugal, with perfect indifference of tone. Elizabeth expressed disbelief and astonishment.

“Did you, Ma-dame ’Lizbeth, ever see a gipsy bridal?”

“That I have, Fugal,—at their favourite haunt too, up among the hills, at this very Linns of Cleuch. Frisel, it must have been you that took me there I think. What a gay bridal that was! all the dale alive—the very asses holding a browsing jubilee. All round the ragged tents what groups of dogs and children sharing the same sport and the same bone!—the gipsy women, with their fine features and wild black eyes, attending the camp-kettles—the men lazily fishing in the

Linn pools, or smoking beneath the trees—rags of linen hanging from every hazel bush, or spread over the dried pebbles of the shrunken stream. I remember their dråg-nets hanging on the rocks, and a sort of pipe they danced to. I think I cried, Frisel, when you carried me home.”

“I’m not sure but you kicked too ; but ye was a very little missy then. That was the year before the fairies tried to steal ye.”

“Kicked !” said Elizabeth, laughing. “Well, it may be so. I however kept our mutual secret, up to this hour I think. I wandered back alone next day ; and, except the broken branches, and the turf scorched by their fires, every sign had vanished.”

“But though you have seen a gipsy bridal ye never heard of an ould tinkler dying a fair-strae death, Ma-dame ’Lizabeth. No ! nor no man for ye. The ould tinkler people are reasonable ; they submit to be drowned in a pool when their time comes. The gipsy line of trade does not suit ould people.”

As Elizabeth was certainly not prepared to bring evidence against Fugal’s opinion, backed too by that of the country, she said no more about the habits of the short-lived wandering race.

“ Lend me your arm here to lean on, Don Von Blunderbush,” said Frisel.—“ Och, my lunzie bane ! If ye had made a muir-hen, or a Mally Bane, o’ the quean ye saw scougin’ i’ the mirk o’ the gloamin’ in the dean wood, ye wad ha’e saved me a sarkful o’ sair banes.—But saw ye nothing, my leddy ?”

Elizabeth, who thought it prudent to keep her share of the adventure to herself, was spared the trouble of reply by Miss Jacobina Pingle, who, bound for Monkshaugh to take her place in the *great churching* of to-morrow, caught Frisel’s words and sang out—

“ Her love being a hunting, the rain coming on,
 She went under the bushes herself for to screen,
 Her white apron being about her he has ta’en her for a swan ;
 But, alas, a ma chree ! he shot sweet Mally Bane.”

“ It was my Irish joe learned me that lang syne, on the cerie nights he came to the Palmer’s land to tryste out the howdie wife. I wish he may have been the thing after a’, Francie ? There was a black ring about yon hollow ee. However, I am served and set by now,—so we’ll ha’e nae mair o’ thae dolefu’ ditties. In a merry night like this I’se gi’e ye a merry lilt ;” and Jacobina sang

to a lively tripping air, Frisel striking in occasionally—

“The throstle and the ousel cock,
The ruddock and the wren,
With bucksome lay, from glade to rock,
Bring lusty spring agen.

Then hie thee, love, to the glad green-wood,
Where we so blithe have been ;
Then hie thee to the glad green-wood,
And reign our Sylvan Queen.

“The salmon leaping in the flood,
The wild-buck bounding free,
The spear shall feel, to the bolt-shot reel,
And all, fair love, for thee.
Then hie thee, love,” &c. &c.

“Now, Francie, hold your peace, and let me sing,” said Jacobina ; and with the various mimic contortions of an affected singer, panting, and wriggling, and spreading out her fingers on her breast, she *skirled*—we wish some of them could have seen her in warning—

“I come ! I come, my hunter love,
Scorning their gauds and gold,
Thy food to dress—thy lip to press,—
With thee to range the wold.”

Frisel then took her hand gallantly, and sung—

“Then doff thy ’broidered robe, ladye,
And don the frolic green,
And hie thee to the glad green-wood ;—
Hark ! my merry mates hail their Queen.”

“ There’s another verse about a moonlight couch among the lady-breckans,” said Jacobina.

“ Thank you for what we have already got,” replied Elizabeth.

“ Indeed, Laddy ’Lizabeth, songs are rank grammar to us maidens. In that fairy-land, sirs, ye’ll notice it’s aye love, love, love ! Now in this cauldrie, naked, grey-day-light warld of ours, the cry on the other hand is aye siller, siller, siller ! The axle-tree o’ the globe is made o’ siller, Francie ;—the world rins round on’t, sirs.”

“ Gelt, gelt, gelt ! as they say in Flanders, Ma-dame Lizbeth,” said Fugal, contemptuously, who was seldom over-burdened with cash himself. “ Pitiful cullions ! that don’t know a carabine from a plough-pettle.”

— “ So that it is not easy for a simple maiden to judge how she should match,” continued Jacky. “ The greedy man scrapes together and clutches gold ; and the thief he steals it ; and so fresh gold loosens the lang lash of the lawyer, to blister the back of the poor thief. The judge claps on his cap, and ruffles up—a’ for the gold—and says, ‘ Ye must be hanged, Sir Thief, and the Lord have mercy on your soul !’—and so pouches the pelf. The very hangman, sirs, will not slip the

cord, to put the poor sinner out of his pain, till the gold is telled down. Leal stark love and kindness is clean out of the land. John Hutchen pawned his soul to the Foul Thief for gold; and the blood of an innocent lamb sealed the sacrament. But what's that to me? Wha daur say boh! to my banner? What business have I wi' John Hutchen's doings? Godly Gideon forbad the banns. Weel,—the auld barrow-tram is sleeping on the rungs on a pickle oat-chaff down i' the Sourholes: there's down-beds, with purple canopies, and canary night-possets served in a lordly dish, yonder-away, sirs. Whilk sleeps the sounder? Answer me that, Francie Frisel. There's ugsome, laithly dreams going in thae pit-mirk nights, sirs. But some folk never dream till they waken, and shall dream nae mair."

Elizabeth liked Jacobina's songs better than this wild raving; and she attempted to lead the subject back to the broken stanza.

"Weel, for my ain part, Lady 'Lizabeth—but lassie they say ye're married; I read something about that in my settlements. Weel, marriage is honourable; better marry than miscarry ye ken—but for my ain part, I think a young leddy come to discreet years, had better marry for a bein

down-sitting, as I have done, and a good feather-bed, than mind thae nonsense sangs : for a couch i' the hill-side, let me tell you, is but cauld quarters, and naething like a decent toilette-glass to be seen about it."

" I'm afraid, poor Jacky, ye sometimes find it so," said Elizabeth, compassionately.

" Jacky, quo she ! Weel Jacky be it then between ourselves as kinswomen. But, Francie, what made ye o' the settlements I brought frae the Whim yestreen ? Ye ken the morn is our bridal kirking. I maun ha'e a' my buskings and papers ready."

" Busk ye, busk ye, my bonnie, bonnie bride," sung Frisel, taking her hand. The lure took—the *settlements* were forgotten ; and laughing aloud in insane triumph, and singing—" Busk ye, busk ye"—poor Jacobina went screaming on her darksome way.

" I am glad to find that you are so suddenly become singing whole, Master Frisel ;" said Elizabeth.

" O ! for singing—I'll die singing, my ledly, like the swans ; but I would give my lugs that Captain Wolfe Grahame saw these same marriage-settlements, as poor Jacobina calls them. I have

been looking for an opportunitty to let ye sæ all day, my leddy. They are real curiosities.[†]—But, my certes, I'll no be a hale man sac soon ! The souple limmer laid on as if she had been beetling hemp—little doubt but the lurdane has tried that trade i' the Bridewell before now—ugh !”

“ And is a ready hand at beetling a *hempie*,” said Fugal, with a jolly laugh at his own joke. “ I wish though we had you a lick of the Riga Balsam, with which them Pengun nuns 'nointed our men's wownds in Flanders. It would make a sound man of the little that's o' you in the pulling of a trigger.” Fugal looked down with a half supercilious air on the under-sized untravelled civilian who hopped and hirpled at his side.

“ I chopped off my thumb once, in hewing a Memel log into pallisades for our 'trenchments, Madame Lizbeth. It was this—no, it was this—the trigger thumb.” Fugal played both thumbs, as if on trial. Sound, supple, serviceable members they both seemed. “ I can't be sure now which it was ; and when not sure of my ground I am apt to be very ticklish about what I says, Madame 'Lizbeth. I had no leisure to think much about such a trifle ; but by good luck stuck the thumb somewhere in the gould band of my

foraging cap ; and that evening in camp, having nothin' else to do, I gives it a dip in the Riga and claps him to. Look ye now, Francie," and he worked the joint of the thumb. " Well, I had the same use of it five minutes thereafter."

" That is nothing to auld Richie Whands of the Royals," said Frisel, " who had a leg set on with the Riga. But thae blockheads of Penguns, as you call them, did his leg-job Mearns fashion,—clapped the calf where the shin should be."

" A percise thing of the same kind happened in our troop," said Fugal gravely, " with one Hodges, an uncommissioned officer."

" Ah ha !—but in the Royals, they have a trick worth two of that. They whipped off Richie's unsightly member, and turned it fair round. Richie would not have minded his shin a pin-head, he said ; but while it stood that way, his big toe was forever in the way of his rear-file."

" Take huz alongst with you, Master Frisel," said Fugal, who abhorred having his stories overtrumped by any one, but particularly by the Whittret. " Hodges only changed his stirrup—as he was not of the foot-wobblers. But this, Madame 'Lizbeth, is nothin' to the Riga."

Far away from the group, the scene, the con-

versation, were the wandering thoughts of Elizabeth ; but the sound of her own name recalled her attention.

“ We are like to have a snowy evening, Fugal,” said she. “ Had you not better remain at Monks-haugh, and not return to your wigwam to-night ?”

“ A mere joke to the snows we had in Flanders,” replied Fugal, scorning the tameness of a Scottish tempest. “ I remember scouring them moors in Flanders once, when neither town nor village, house nor hould, was to be seen for fifty miles round, each buried in snow as deep as the Ring-an’s scaur lies below Earnescraig Tower.”

“ The gude help ye to your dinner then !” said Frisel ; “ that is if ye were hungry.”

“ Hungry !—I was as hungry as a Sourholes’ weaver’s prentice ;—when Bess makes me a plunge in the snow—for the jade smelt oats below !—Ye slut, says I, will ye fling ?—and over boots, over spurs, there we plunged in a wreath, groping half blind. I gave her a taste up to the rowel, Francie ; and up we sprung ! We had gone through the roof of one of them rich boor’s houses, I found, for at her left hoof there came up reeking a tailyie of as good corned beef, Madame ’Lizabeth, as ever hungry trooper dined off. Worse nor the Bishop

got his foot in the Dutch boor's pot that day, I trow. •Well, Providence, Madame 'Lizabeth, is a rich provider, here or in Flanders."

"You may well say so, Fugal; for I question if ever any man got his dinner in the same way before."

"I rather thinks not.—'He is a devil of a fellow that Scrymmager,' said Ben Bump of ours, riding up as I was eating my smoking rations on the ground. 'I gave him his share, but said nothin.'—D'yc take me? It does me good now to tell over to your ladyship, or any genteel parson, my trifling haps. Your honours never doubts on ould soger's word like them low inedicated raps in the Castleburn smiddy."

Elizabeth perceived that Frisel was bent on making the Corporal find liquor to wash down his beef; so she led back to the Riga balsam and the Beguin nuns.

"They call 'em the Sours of charité," said Fugal. "Where's the Scotch lad of de Bruce's troop? I always looks to his dressings first," said Sour Marguerite.—"That was a joke they long kept up again' me in our troop.—It was worth a man's pains, Madame 'Lizabeth, to get a slash, only to come under her soft hands.—But what I tould you,

Francie, is nothin' to the Riga. I saw a cock once—more by token, it was stolen from the Frau Vanbrisket's roost by Sarjent Peterel of ours.—He struck off the head with his sabre—this ways.—D'ye take me? Try the Riga now, cried I—and I dips me in my little finger, and runs round the wownd—held the head on like one second—and the gallant beast ran crowing and clapping his wings through our camp. 'To horse, lads!' cried Grandboy, thinking it was cock-crow, and we were to be engaged that morning. It was but an experiment," added Fugal, with a careless air.

Such stories were no poultice to Frisel's aching bones; and he sprung, in malice prepense, upon the low turf-coped wall which bordered the avenue of Monkshaugh house, from which mansion lights were now seen twinkling cheerily through the intermingled and convoluted branches of the guardian trees and holly bushes, and ran fleetly along, ever and anon crowing like a cock, and clapping his wings, till the whole family issued from the low portal with lights, to ascertain the cause of this portentous screaming of the "bird of dawn."

"*Lu peti rascaille*," grinned Fugal, disdainfully, for Fugal spoke French, as well as High and Low Dutch, Irish, and high English, to the delight

and edification of all Castleburn. “If I had him here I would crack him between my thumbs—for a gentleman of the Greys to deal in non-truths, Madame ’Lizbeth ! Bu—u—u—u—u” —

Fugal shook his head rapidly, so as literally to rattle and shake out these indignant murmurs. So exceedingly wroth was he at this crowing impeachment of his veracity, that he declined walking into the house to partake of the refreshments which no poor man ever left Monkshaugh’s gate without being urged to accept.

Frisel was instantly at Elizabeth’s side to open the court gate, and whispered—“Ye need not mention if ye please, my leddy, to Monkshaugh or Effie, yon bit splore o’ mine i’ the dean wood. It might make them uneasy. The Laird is sae fleyed for a wee drap brandy inflaming a bruise or a green wound ; and Effie is as frightened on the other hand for a mouthfu’ o’ decent victuals raising the fever, that between them, they’re the twa warst folks I ken to entrust wi’ ony bit accident I may come by in the way o’ duty.

“I fear then, Frisel, you are hurt. There is clotted blood on your hair. Shall I send you a little brandy to have your head washed ?—The cold night warrants it.”

“Never mind, my leddy—mony thanks though. But ye see, in the first place, I never could let brandy higher than my mouth since a sark gaed owre my head; and, in the second place, I’ll get a drap cream and a clout from Baby Strang—that quean has as canny a hand about a body’s ails as ever a Pengun in Flanders—and I’ll be as sound as a bell before the morn, ready to tell ye, if ye give me leave, all about Miss Jacky’s settlements.”

On this they parted, Elizabeth leaving her wounded squire to his favourite Beguin; and he consigning her to a state of greater curiosity and suspense than she chose to avow.

When Elizabeth awoke next morning, the cold, feeble, grey light of a winter’s dawn was diffusing itself through her chamber.

“Is it all a dream?” thought she. “Or have I really again heard the voice of that singular woman? ‘The same thrilling voice in which she called—‘Life and death are on my message.’ Has she been under my window? I have a half-remembered consciousness of striving to awake fully—to rise—to follow the voice which called me.” In confirmation of this opinion, Elizabeth found several little pebbles scattered about her window

sill ; such as if pattered against the glass, might be presumed to awaken the sleeper within.

But the duties of this important day demanded her immediate attention. The white beaver, by the activity of Baby Strang, was already arrived from the Tower ; and Fugal had Titania's trappings in high order. The Whittret, quite recovered, came into the parlour, and whispered to Elizabeth—" I'm now as sure, my leddy, as I'm in the body, that the carlin I met yestreen is Fugal's last wife, the Irish quean—but I'll be upsides wi' her. I'll fasten the witch-branks on her gills !—She plays nae mair o' her camperlecks in this country-side."

" If you meet her any where let me know of it," said Elizabeth ; " but be cautious how you proceed."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE WAPPINSCHAW.

“ In the heathen worship of God, a sacrifice without a heart was thought ominous.”

SOUTH.

Bottom. Are we all met?

Quince. Pat, pat; and here’s a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal.

Midsummer Night’s Dream.

THE morning of the Fast was bright, and even warm for the season—a gladdening winter’s day. The bell of the kirk of St. Serf, suspended between two mossy elm trees, had, for a long hour, blattered, blared, yelled, jowed, thudded—in short, emitted every discordant sound of which a cracked bell is capable;—and at last intimated something like Johnnie Jow’s fixed purpose of “ ringin’ in;” for now the gay equipages of the “ Whim family” were discerned at intervals flashing along the valley, and next appeared glancing through the line

of old grey trees which garnished that part of the highway which led through the “ parks of Monkshaugh.” The Rantletree squadron advanced to the point of action from the opposite direction ; and midway, as it were, the Monkshaugh household forces defiled from the avenue of The Place upon the highway—Elizabeth and her master of the horse forming the chivalry, the Laird, on his roan pony, leading on the foot.

“ Since I must sit alone, stuck up like a crow in a mist yonder, I will be off—I find I can just save my distance,” said Elizabeth ; and, without waiting to hear the expected remonstrance against desertion, she waved her hand and flew away, desirous of being seated in quiet before the whole aristocracy of the valley mustered in the church-porch.

And now the barouche, the tandem, the car, the out-riders, the blazoned pannels, the glittering harness, and all the appliances of modern wealth, came dashing on—whips smacking, wheels glancing, curs barking, pebbles flying, and villagers scampering aside, and then standing agape. Monkshaugh, disdaining to yield one inch of the road, would certainly have run some risk of being trodden down, had not Baby Strang seized his bridle, and

pulled him aside with a jerk that almost pitched him from the saddle, exclaiming—"Laird, Laird. Harletillum will tread ye i' the yird." 'This was but the beginning of sorrows.

Elizabeth had taken her place in church some time before even Fugal joined her, wrath smoking from his bristled nostrils.

"Confound the English Tom among 'em should ha'e got the start of an ould Grey's man, Madam 'Lizbeth, had not Monkshaugh mounted me on a beast more like a horned nolt than a Christian troop-horse fit for the riding of a gentleman who has sarved."

Elizabeth whispered some apologetical explanation to the trooper; and already wished that this Fast-day were fairly over.

The steps of the barouche were heard to come thundering and rattling down; and with all needful preparatory bustle and flourish, the Whim family, accompanied by their handsome guest, entered and took their places—Mr. Delancy caged between the mother and daughter.

Lord Rantletree next defiled into the gallery, leading in his tall flat-backed lady, looking, on this day of pitched battle with the powers of democracy, as if his single, full-puffed, and well powdered

Ramillies, thrust into the breach, might of itself “stem the overwhelming torrent,” as he called it. Hats are said, and with much truth, to be redolent of individual character. How much more so were wigs—the wigs of those days. This must at least be true on phrenological principles. Hats are a remove farther from the seat of sensation.

“And where tarries my gallant Laird o’ Monkshaugh?” cried a shrill voice from the remaining perch of aristocracy in the gallery of St. Serf Kirk—a voice which froze Monkshaugh’s marrow as he came up the creaking wooden stair. “Come your ways, tripping a-tip-toe down the loft stair, like a dainty baudrons feared to wet her feet in crossing a gutter.”

Monkshaugh cast but one glance at the opposite side of the lists. Fashionable, splendid, *imposing*, was the spectacle there, and, horror of horrors! at the head of his family pew sat Jacky Pingle in full blow—bedizened with every silken rag he had ever bestowed upon her—furs, feathers, flowers, gauzes, trinkets, stomachers, ribbons of all hues, and flourishing, above all, a broken French fan, with which bending low in courtesy, she coquettishly advanced, touching his arm with its tip. Had Monkshaugh’s eyes possessed the power of the

basilisk, then had this been a day of *dule* and be-reavement to the widowed wife and orphan children of John Jow, who had admitted Jacobina ; as it was he stood confounded, unable to think, or speak, or act.

“ Come your ways,” minced Jacobina, now from the want of sleep, and from feverish excitement and perpetual toil, as mad as ever was—

“ Maid that loves the moon.”

“ No beginning till we sit. Dr. Draunt kens weel what day of the week falls on Tuesday.”

Holding her head coquetishly aside, veiling under their puckered lids the orbs that languished over the form of her chosen bridegroom, pouting her lip, and playing her chest forward in fifty risings and fallings, ducking, and again gracefully recovering herself, Jacobina sidled forward, and once more playfully touched the Laird’s arm with the unlucky fan.

Monkshaugh started back as from an adder, crying vehemently—“ Tak’ her out—tak’ her out !”—Luckily for him Jacobina was attracted by a titter from the Whim pew, and faced round in fury.

“ Hech !—but we are fine with our furs, and

our velvets ; our gold rings, and our gay clothing ! As braw as Bink's wife when she beeked to the minister !—But ken ye, cummers, where a' that bravery leads to ? Wot ye of sic a place as that, wherein their worm dieth not, neither is their fire quenched—where the proud purple Dives must send across the molten gulf to the bruised beggar Lazarus for ae drop o' the wan water to cool his tongue ?—I am often thinking, sirs, it wad be the *Tober Marie* up at the Linns o' Cleuch yonder, where the Lord de Bruce's bride and me have sitten mony a lang bonnie simmer night among the moss and breckans, singing to the wee whitlie maiden baby was buried lang syne beneath Luckie Metcalf's hearth-stane. But where's the Lord de Bruce the day, sirs, when the nobles o' the land are hosting and banding ? Where's the Lord de Bruce the day, John Hurcheon, when ye are driving your chariots of fire through his braid barony ?

Direful and ominous were the fiery glances which John Jow, as he eagerly hobbled up the aisle to place the Bible on the pulpit cushion, threw upwards on our mad heroine. But her frenzy-fit was now far above his control. Tossing abroad her arms she fixed her eyes on Elizabeth, and exclaimed in a wild tone—“ His place is bare. toom

desolate !—yea an howling——But haud up your head, Elizabeth de Bruce !—puir burdalane, there where ye sit—a' that's left i' the brave eagle's nest, ae puir cushie-doo croodling lanely to hide the wound that's rankling in its breast !”——And looking round on the de Bruce tenantry, as if appealing to them in words of that Book, which, according to Deacon Daigh, had turned her brain, she went on.—“ All ye that care about him bemoan him !—and all ye that know his name, say, How is the strong staff broken, and the beautiful rod ! Therefore, I will cry and howl—Oh, Vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer ! Thy plants are gone over the sea. The spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits and thy vintage. Joy and gladness is taken from their plentiful fields !—Na, never bend your luckenbrows on me, John Hurcheon ! To my cost I ken ye weel !—The Lord has delivered ye this day into my hands, as sure as ever was Sisera, the proud Captain of Harosheth, delivered into the hands of a woman—yea, into the hands of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite. I'm but Lady o' Kippencereery Wester”—— and again her mood changing, she turned pranking herself, and flirtingly advanced to the unfortunate Monkshaugh.

“ Let that mad woman be taken out,” said Mr. Hutchen, in the audible whisper of one entitled to be heard and obeyed.

“ D’ye hear that, my leddy ?” whispered Frisel, who, though delighted with her public testimony, would now have given the world to be rid of her presence. “ Round to him yonder like a fire-flaught.” And off Jacobina flew, leaving Monkshaugh in ecstasy, exchanging a look of congratulation with his leige-man. But they reckoned without their host ; for back she flounced.

“ Deed and I’ll do no such thing, Francie Frisel, as quit the side of my bold bridegroom this day. It would na be mensefu’ nor canny. A weary time, love, since we were proclaimed yon night, by tuck o’ drum and the fire-bell i’ the flames o’ Cambuskenneth. A brave sight for the Kirk o’ St. Serf though, sirs, to see twa brides of the blood o’ de Bruce kirked in one day—if the pale maiden yonder be really in the body. What think ye, Lord Rantletree, there where ye sit with your cabrach leddy at your elbow, as mim as Malcolm the Maiden ? What’s your judgment of that auld story o’ de Bruce’s bairn and bride ? For ye aye like, wi’ your tale, to be thought to ha’e a judgment.”

A general titter spread round the congregation, followed by a sudden and universal fit of coughing. Fortunately his lordship was as deaf as a post, an infirmity however which he would never acknowledge, probably fancying it below the dignity of the peerage. But while Jacobina's random shafts flew round, he saw that there was a spirit of disaffection abroad, and rose in his place, "feeling himself called upon to say a few words." His lordship had never said a few words in his life. However he might end, he always began "a many." He was indeed as remarkable for one property of matter as any member of the peerage whatever—*length*:—length of nose, length of chin, length of wind, length of spine, tremendous length ! which he put all forth now, as wrapped in his own long arms he bent over the gaping congregation below, with the indescribable air of ease ill at ease ; remarking, according to the report in the Rookstown Journal of the following week, in a low but gradually swelling voice, "That it was alarming, *exceedingly* alarming, *unparalleled*, so far as he was aware, in the history of a country hitherto remarkable for its loyalty and good disposition, that on the morning of a day of national fast, proclaimed, and appointed by Royal authority, in which the

higher orders of society, coalesced with, and countenanced respectable persons, though of an inferior grade, (a slight inclination towards the pew of Harletillum,) in opposing and stemming the torrent of insubordination, infidelity, and Jacobinical principles."

"There's an honour on earth!—called after me, sirs—Jackybinical," cried Miss Pingle exultingly; and his lordship seeing the general laugh, and hearing no words distinctly, became exceedingly displeased.

—"That a purpose of this pure and exalted kind, should be obstructed and thwarted by the clamours of the factious, is the less marvellous, since it has fallen to the lot of the—the—the *individual* who has now the honour of addressing you, to witness a spectacle on this morning, which lays open the arcana of that abyss on which this ancient, and once loyal kingdom is hovering—the vortex, which threatens to suck into its indiscriminate jaws, all that is noble and exalted—the throne, the church, and the domestic hearth!"

A rustle of amazement and terror spread through the audience. A pin might have been heard to drop as his Lordship proceeded:—

"I beheld this morning, in a ride through the

valley of Strathoran, the domestic servant, or menial of a gentleman of ancient family, occupied in a way which I am certain was not sanctioned, and if known, must have brought on that individual the deep displeasure of his master.—That was nothing. In the clachan of Sourholes, in this parish, I farther beheld—with my own eyes I beheld ! a person, a rather remarkable sort of person, who is understood to be the spiritual director, or pastor, of a handful of sectaries or schismatics—I do not charge my memory with the particular denomination they assume—engaged, on this the morning of a national fast, in that manual, and, except for the day, harmless and innocent operation of horticulture, called in your vernacular speech *sheuching* or *shoughing* the useful pot-herb termed *leeks*, in contempt and defiance”—

“ And that’s as true—the dour Cameronian—I saw him mysel’ this morning,” bawled Jacky, “ delving away in his auld coat, and three-storey bush wig, the very beauty o’ holiness.”

“ Ye may say, Jacky,” whispered Frisel aloud, “ that Mr. Haliburton kent na what day it was till he heard the parish bell toll, and that he then dropped his dibble ; for though of a different opinion from us about fasts o’ man’s making, he said

he would be loath to offend my Lord Rantle tree, or any weaker brother."

"Weaker brother ! Ah, ye're a rogue, Francie," said Jacobina, shaking her head and laughing ; but here John Jow, whose hasty step had for some time been heard creaking on the stairs, pounced like a vulture on his fair quarry, clutching at her by the very bridal favour she wore on her breast ; and in spite of kicking and squalling he bore her off, *vi et armis*.

His Lordship resumed his place, alike in his sittings down and risings up, shewing the peer, the patriot, and the Christian—the latter character freshly taken up, and chiefly upon public grounds.

It appeared that Master Jow and the fair promulgator of Jacobinical doctrine, had come to terms on the stairs. She was not violently expelled from the church ; for the wily functionary knew, by bitter experience, that to thrust her out by the door was only to provoke a volley of stones, screams, and sarcastic speeches through the window, that even now exhibited marks of her prowess, which the small heritors, after sundry meetings and ordering estimates, refused point blank to repair, as the glazier's estimated charge

was nine shillings and seven-pence halfpenny. He therefore placed her in the *letterin*, under the *surveillance* of those grey fathers of the Scottish kirk, the elders.

Although this scene has occupied some space in the narrative, five minutes of real time speeded the whole affair ; and by the end of that space the Reverend Dr. Draunt hove in sight, sailing on like the boat of Anningat, "slow and heavy laden."

"Methinks we hear a buzz as we ascend into this our sacred place," preluded the Doctor, in those solemn base tones which his dignity, from the time he had been the parish school-master, held indispensable, even when asking on week-days a pinch of snuff from Mr. Skirlin, the precentor. John Jow shook his fist—a fist having all the authority in that place of those symbols of awful significance—the mace or the sceptre ; and Jacobina made faces, and with great spirit gesticulated open defiance. She had, however, with all her mental infirmity, some remaining sense of propriety ; and from this time it was only in pantomime that she carried on the war, nodding kindly and familiarly to her favourites around, and reflecting back every air, grace, and grimace of Miss Juliana Hutchen, as faithfully as does the spectre of

the Brocken the attitudes and movements of the figure on the opposite hills. The titter again became general among the young people who watched this performance. Even the slow-rolling and prominent eye of Dr. Draunt came at last to apprehend the source of the general mirth : he heard also the voice of Jacobina shrilling and quivering in air as she chanted the psalm, leaving the precentor an octave below, and the congregation a full bar behind her. All this and more did Dr. Draunt bear and Mr. Skirlin endure ; for they both, like Johnnie Jow, knew by bitter experience, that Miss Jacky was a lady whom it was not altogether safe to provoke ; as, at any time, she had much less respect for the “ retort courteous ” than love of the “ quip modest,” which she never hesitated in dealing round to her friends.

The prayer was now made—very loyal and something long-winded—quite in the taste of those times : Wild and despicable times they must have been—democracy rushing on foaming like a dog called mad, shewing more indeed of the rabid temper than of the bold honest heart—and cold frozen aristocracy warming itself in equally mad pursuit ; seeking, in its panic terror, to knock on the head all before it, instead of boldly muzzling

up the brute, and watching its symptoms before its destruction was decreed.

In France it was the privilege of the lower orders to pronounce on military glory and the fine arts; in England their province is politics; but the blood-bought birthright of Scotland is theology; and, in the exercise of this national privilege, Jacobina whispered across—

“Lawrence Halliday, what thought ye o’ the prayer? Like a ‘Tranent puddin’, was it not?—very lang—but ver-ry lean? It’s no every one that’s gifted wi’ the ten talons committed to my dainty douce Gideon Haliburton.”

“Church officer, before we proceed with the sacred solemnities of this occasion, let the insane female person be removed,” pronounced Dr. Draunt, his plumpy good-natured countenance deepened in hue. The Doctor never *said* any thing; all his speech was *delivery*. He sat down with dignity till Mr. Jow should have effected the expulsion of Jacobina; which, after all his long-suffering, if not patience, that functionary now set about, in earnest, in the first place pinioning her poor skinny arms till they almost cracked.

“Keep your grave-howking claws aff me, John

Jow," shrieked Jacobina.—" And for you, ye snooker out o' feasts o' fat things ; wi' the wine—the wine on the lees—ye would steek the door o' the sanctuary on a puir desolate thing ! But I'll go west to the Sourholes, and get a better sermon than ever ye could preach in your life."—And thus, rushing in her blind rage against the very horns of the altar, off flashed Jacobina, slamming every door after her, and leaving behind a fair proportion of her silken gown-tail as she made her memorable exit. In defiance of the decorum enjoined by the day, the place, and the calling of the reverend Doctor, a modest titter again rustled through the lower pews. Even Lord Rantletree himself, whispering to his lady, suddenly sucked in his hollow cheeks over the hard parting-knock dealt to the "good Doctor."

And now the howling dogs were kicked out, the doors were barred, John Jow resumed his place and screwed his visage to solemn listening, and the discourse commenced, while every man that had a watch noted the hour and minute. It is very well when the times permit politics to be left to newspapers and coffee-rooms, and the pulpit to more fitting purposes. A political sermon is seldom a very interesting one, after the period of its

delivery is past. Lord Rantletree remarked that the discourse occupied "just forty-five minutes twelve seconds; twenty minutes longer than the good Doctor's usual time,—but quite proper on such a day."—Monkshaugh reckoned some seconds of difference; but also gave as his sage opinion, that the sermon was highly proper for the occasion.

The belligerents had had full leisure to survey each other during the discourse, and—such, alas! is human infirmity—to indulge in a few escapes of earthly thoughts, a few wandering excursions upon the mountains of vanity.

Lord Rantletree, in his mental programme for the day, had settled, that after sermon he was first to bow to Lady Harriette Copely, a married lady of rank, the guest of Mrs. Hutchen, and secondly, to the Honourable Elizabeth de Bruce. But Lady Harriette was either a Whig or a Jacobin, or had a headach, or a swelled face from the toothach; for she did not appear at church, and thus left his lordship rather at fault whether Mrs. Hutchen, as a married woman, or Elizabeth, a spinster but connected with the peerage, was entitled to precedence in his courtesies. His lordship was not a person apt to jump at a conclusion.

He took his ground as slowly as surely, and this, together with an internal debate about the propriety of transmitting an account of the “leek-shoughling” sedition to his Majesty’s Advocate for Scotland, or to the Secretary of State, or of prudently suppressing the whole matter as rather reflecting on his zeal in administering the affairs of the county, occupied his lordship’s thoughts.—The good-sense and candour of Dr. Draunt, by the way, notwithstanding his pomposity and alleged gourmandizing propensities, saved his patron from the folly of this official communication. Though Mr. Haliburton held all the high-flying tenets of the first reformers, both in matters of doctrine and discipline, Dr. Draunt knew and said, that “He was a very honest and sincere Christian, who laboured with all zeal to prevent the spread of the popular frenzy among his own flock, as soon as he became aware of its true tendency—as soon as he discovered that the real object of the disaffected and factious, was not,” as the Doctor pompously said, “a reformed church, but a spoliated state.”

Monkshaugh while in church, in defiance of his own wishes and resolutions, felt his eyes irresistibly attracted to the opposite pew. He strove to believe that Mr. Hutchen was not the well-fed,

well-dressed, well-looking, though somewhat domineering and arrogant, person that he actually appeared. Mrs. Hutchen was little different from what she had appeared to Elizabeth ten years before—a little more embonpoint, a little higher in the complexion, it might be, and dressed exactly as her daughter—that is, in the first, if not the best style of the reigning fashion. Miss Juliana might have passed any where for a smart, pretty, young woman, with two coal-black eyes—not quite a match perhaps in their setting, or at least in their expression—a good, if not a delicate complexion, and a fine voluble redundant manner never once at fault.

“She has, I see, the big, thick, red lugs, mut-ton-lists, and ill-shaped nails o’ a’ the Hurchcons,” thought Monkshaugh. “I dare say she has a ram’s horn foot too—her grandmother was hen-toed. There’s not a man in a thousand, nowadays, kens the true points of a fine woman when he sees her. I wad na gi’e a pinch o’ snuff, as Leddy Tamtallan says, for a pair of cherry-cheeks, and twa een ye might make the fellows o’ wi’ a pennyworth of black glass beads!”—With some secret distrust, though disdaining all comparison, Monkshaugh stole a side-glance towards Elizabeth ; her intelligent and

beautiful features “sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought,” and her mind, it must be acknowledged, running as much on her mysterious adventure of the previous night, and the random shafts which Jacobina had fixed in her heart, as on the signs of the times so elaborately demonstrated by Dr. Draunt, and so carefully noted down, as it seemed, by Mr. Delaney, the guest of Harletillum. How indeed could Elizabeth, in her rustic simplicity, have divined, that the real employment of the young gentleman’s pencil, was, making a very clever caricature of the rigid and elongated figure of Lord Rantletree bending a stare of solemn vacuity, from where he sat “aloft in awful state,” down on the preacher, a plumpy, purple, and rather short-necked, but sensible-looking person.

An adoring bend from the pulpit towards the pew of Harletillum, marked the conclusion of the service ;—“ducking observance” which at once determined the first courtesies of the offended peer to Elizabeth. Monkshaugh paid her a similar reverence cordially—so did Mr. Delaney, gracefully and respectfully ; Mr. Hutchen proudly, and Mr. John Hutchen, junior, as nearly as he could hit it in the style of the dragoon officers then quartered in Rookstown.—Dogs barked—broad

blue bonnets winnowed the air—the gudewives gathered up the folds of their broad-cloth cloaks—and under cover of all this Elizabeth glided away, the crowd in the churchyard making respectfu' way for her. Titania was already at the churchyard stile, held by Fugal; and mounting in haste, Elizabeth had reached Monkshaugh, while the lord of the mansion was still fuming and fretting amid the bustle and convolution of pelisses, surtouts, grooms, carriages, and saddle-horses, in which he had been entrapped.

Miss Juliana Hutchen, darting gracious notices right and left, first advanced, leaning on the arm of her father, while her mother received a similar attention from the stranger; and to the infinite provocation and discomfiture of the Earl of Rantletree—though he had sat two minutes, by his watch, after every body else was withdrawn from church—Mr. John Hutchen, junior, a good-humoured, swaggering, raw lad, with clanking boot-heels and a fashionable mop head, caring little, and understanding less about the claims of high-born earls and grey countesses, seized, no question asked, and now bore aloft the 'bony claw' of the Lady Rantletree, notwithstanding the rebuking glance of his father, and the solemn stare of the Earl, who,

snuffing the air, followed, all too late to rectify this solecism in manners—this utter confounding of ranks. It was in file with Monkshaugh that the Earl followed; and they exchanged neighbourly civilities. Upon the strength of this Mr Hutchen presented his daughter, saying, “Juliana, my dear, you surely remember your kind friend, Mr. Grahame of Monkshaugh.”

Monkshaugh bowed, and hemmed dryly enough to the lady’s salutation; and the roan pony not appearing, he was left in the porch with Juliana, who was to be driven home by Mr. Delaney; so it had been arranged by herself, but the tandem had not yet appeared.

“Vastly delighted indeed to make—to renew rather—the acquaintance of Mr. Gra-ham,” said the young lady. Her cue was to be gracious; indeed, as she was but lately returned from England, she felt it peculiarly incumbent upon her to be so to all “old country neighbours,” both as a patriotic Scotswoman, and as “an amiable, engaging, young creature.” She therefore on seeing her father wheel off, launched into a flow of brisk talk.

“I see you fancy that England must have changed me, Mr. Gra-ham, as it does too many young ladies; but I am, I assure you, quite the

same Strathoran lassie, as happy to dance a Strathspey with you, or to sing you a Scotch melody, as before I ever saw the Italian opera. Apropos, of what school is our fair friend Elizabeth a disciple?—I am, I own now, Delancy, all German—not fashionable in the least, Mr. Gra-ham. There is a depth, a mellowness, a *gusto* in the German compositions that is quite irresistible. Don't you think so, Mr. Gra-ham?"

Monkshaugh, at a loss to know whether the lady really meant music, Westphalia hams, or German sausages by her *gusty* compositions, would have ventured some reply had time been permitted; but for this heinous English mispronunciation—profanation rather he thought it—of his family name; a thing which he never could patiently tolerate in man, woman, or child. Many persons would have been highly amused with the free air and easy flippancy of a young lady on such excellent terms with herself, thus elbowing her way onward, so perfectly ignorant or unconscious of the claims of others, that she could not even be said to disregard them. She seemed, indeed, totally unconscious of their possible existence. Not so Monkshaugh, who, while the young lady bowled on, stood in whimsical perplexity, dumb, looking straight for-

ward for the roan pony, and sometimes even pondering the rashness of committing sleek beaver, crisp wig, grey silk stockings, Spanish-leather shoes and all, to the mercy of the elements, so that he might escape the farther gracious notice of Miss Juliana Hutchen. The scene appeared to have more amusement for Mr. Delaney. But the roan pony and the Whittret at last made their appearance.

“And how does my old friend Elizabeth?—looking very beautiful, I am sure,” said the lady.

“The honourable Elizabeth de Bruce, Madam,” said the Laird, “is”——

“I rejoice to hear it, Mr. Gra-ham. Mama is so excessive sorry that our abominable, never-ending round of engagements prevents us the pleasure of seeing more of Elizabeth and you at the *Whim*, Mr. Gra-ham.”

Monkshaugh affronted, provoked, and yet wholly overpowered by this ‘sweet jargoning,’ fidgetted and sniffled, and wished to say something biting and smart, yet civil withal—but out it would not come. He looked to his privy councillor, Frisel, in whose elvish eyes a thousand sharp and saucy replies were glancing; but, as he could not give

language to their expression, he at last forced up for himself—

“The Honourable Elizabeth de Bruce sat to-day in the de Bruce family seat in the kirk of St. Serf, Miss Juliana Hurcheon.”

“Ah ! well I am so stupid in a country congregation, Delancy,” replied Miss Juliana. “Yet I think I do remember something of a lady rather remarkably dressed, sitting in your pew, Mister—eh—Gra-ham.”

The Laird was ready to dance a Strathspey alone.

“Those who have once had the honour of seeing Miss de Bruce will not readily forget her,” said Delancy, respectfully. “Those who have, for the first time, seen her among the old escutcheons and memorials of a family, of which I believe she is the last descendant—never !”

Monkshaugh looked up with pleasure in his face ; and the gentlemen exchanged bows on this in confirmation of the sentiment.

“Delancy !” exclaimed Miss Hutchen, “is it not intolerable of these lazy fellows to keep us here in the rain ? I shall make papa rate them soundly. They have larger salaries, and more liberal appointments than in any establishment of this kingdom, perhaps. *Au revoir*, Mr. Gra-ham ”

The young lady laid her small fingers delicately on the back of Monkshaugh's hand of withered lilies—patted it—squeezed it graciously, familiarly, condescendingly ;—smiled most winningly, and bowed adieu.

“ Love to dear Elizabeth.—I see you are all impatience, Delaney,” continued Miss Juliana, taking the arm of the gentleman whom she thus wrongfully accused ; “ but I could not possibly *cut* poor old Gra-ham. They are country neighbours—hereditary friends of papa's and grand-papa's up to Noah's ark, I dare say. Great bores no doubt—but it is so heartless to forget old family friends. I was obliged too to explain why mania could not ask them to our ball. It would have taken them quite out of their element—yet we would not for worlds hurt their feelings.”

“ Not off yet,” cried she, again turning round.

“ I wish to goodness we could set you down, Mr. Gra-ham—our carriage passes near your place—don't it?”

There was no reply. Monkshaugh fidgetted from leg to leg without finding a leg to rest on, and the voluble lady bowled on.

“ Elizabeth is with you, I presume—Do you never visit town ? So rationally I am certain you

spend your hours—reading, walking, music. ‘I do so dote on a tranquil life ! Do you know, Delancy, but whisper it not to the rushes ! I could sometimes wish that I had been born a village maid.’”

So ended the memorable Wappinschaw of the aristocracy of Strathoran—a day of humiliation, if not of fast, to many.

“ Heard ye ever of such an impertinent minx ?” cried the indignant Laird of Monkshaugh to his fair guest on entering his own house, forgetting his resentment at her desertion from the church porch in yet hotter displeasure.—“ Me ! a man in my grand climacteric—to dance a Strathspey wi’ me ! not to speak of who *I am*, and who *she is* !—and to be squeezed and smirked at that gate by a brat of a lassie ! As I’m a gentleman I wonder I got patience to keep my hands off her. A clack too that would deafen ten millers. ‘ Elizabeth,’ and ‘ dear Mr. Gra-ham’.—Let the Southrons mak’ *Kemble* of our ancient Norman Campo-bello, *Scatts* o’ our rough-riding Scotts, and *Forbs* o’ a’ our auld frank Forbeses, since our country-folks seem to think themselves refined into Englishmen born when they get their auld family names cockneyfied. As our noble kinswoman says—‘ I’m expecting, Robin, to waken some morning soon, my Lady *Tom-*

tallon. But I rede them, 'Lizbeth, to let bide the name o' *Græme*; for its nane o' their mongrel, mushroom, Southron names o' yesterday. 'This young Englified minx too! as if the name of Grahame had na been lang enough current in Scotland to be plain spoken, even by the seed and breed o' Hurcheon."

"Indeed we ought to have stipulated for the preservation of our national names in the articles of Union," said Elizabeth, smiling at the wrath of her old friend.

"Delancy too!" he resumed, unheeding. "Neither sir, nor master! nor manners nor modesty! What will this world come too at last? as our noble kinswoman says.—But, as I shall protest, there is the very swankie, Delancy, in proper person—gallantly mounted, master and man.—Ha! he is alighting!—Effie Feehnie—Effie Feehnie! dust the beaufet there!—'Lizbeth de Bruce, ye will litter this room with your nonsense books in spite of what tongue and tooth can say.—Sweep in the hearth-stane, Francie—or stay—gife me the besom, and run ye down to the court. He is at the holly fount, as I declare!—run knave.—'Lizbeth, my love, go and comb out your hair.—Your ruff

is clean crumpled—ye never will learn proper respect for a lace frill.”

“ I presume,” said Elizabeth, “ that I may now lay aside my robes of parade, as I hope we shall have no more kirking competitions with our rich neighbours. To me, who am not even noticed, they afford little triumph ; and surely the head of the house of Monkshaugh possesses better distinctions.”

Before Monkshaugh could reply the Whittret announced “ The Honourable Frederick Delancy,” in tones as loud and saucy as ever pampered menial of the Whim.

CHAPTER XV.

THE VISITER.

Lend me a while thy patience,
And condescend to hear a young man speak.

SHAKESPEARE.

THERE is, at first sight, a charm in manner, which, next to the spell of great personal beauty, is of irresistible force. The united captivations of the young gentleman's name, appearance, and manners, acted as a talisman upon the hospitable Monkshaugh; and as he was one of those old-fashioned persons who would have felt it marked rudeness not to introduce any gentleman whom he received, to whatever ladies happened to be in the same room, he presented the stranger by name to Elizabeth. The bow of the gentleman was low—the obeisance of the lady, slight:—they met as strangers.

“ I fear that I may be considered an intruder here,” said Delancy, turning to Monkshaugh as

soon as they were seated. "I had the good fortune to pick up this ornament,"—and he produced the flaming brooch of diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and carbuncles, usually worn on gala days by Jacobina Pingle,—“which I saw this morning worn by a lady under your care. I have little skill in gems—but the size and rarity of this”—he turned it round in various lights—“and the circumstance of its being worn by a person evidently of consideration, from the place she occupied at the head of your pew, induced me to let a servant drive home Miss Hutchen, and to take horse and ride here with it immediately.”

The insulted Laird of Monkshaugh looked from the stranger to Elizabeth, his features swelling and reddening as if he would have burst; while she laughed in her own despite at the deliberate impertinence of the address, and partly in sympathy with the covert humour which lurked in the eye, and played on the lip, of this very easy Mr. Delancy.

“I shall take care of the gem,” said she, “for the proper owner.”

“’Lizabeth de Bruce,” sputtered Monkshaugh, “I’ll be driven out of house and judgment by that crazy limmer! A demented woman; sir,

whose frail brain got a twist at the great burning of the hotel of my noble kinsman, the Lord de Bruce, nearly twenty years bygone. It runs in her daft head, that my fair cousin there, is a murdered bairn, buried below a midwife's hearth-stane. But I think she gave you a husband the day, Leddy 'Lizabeth."

The stranger fixed his keen eyes on the glowing face of Elizabeth.

"That is a kindness she never withholds from her favourites," replied Elizabeth. "Matrimony has no warmer admirer."

"A sensible lady," said Delancy, smiling.

"It is true ye say, 'Lizabeth. I myself, Mr. Delancy, who have never *yet* married a led dy, she has ta'en the crazy fancy am her gudeman no less; though I protest as I am a gentleman, that two pair of pearl-coloured silk stockings grafting, and a pair of old black silk gloves to be thumbed, about the time I came out at the bar, the whilk were never returned, is the sum and substance of her connexion with the family of Monkshaugh—an it be not to gi'e the pitiful thing an auld' dud silk gown, or an aumous at my kitchen yett. It is a sore calamity, sir, to befall a respectable family being thus haunted. But King George on his throne, honest

man, a pattern of virtue, has been worried wi' daft women a' his days ; and if he must put up wi' Peg Nicholson, it does not become a private gentleman to complain of Jacky Pingle."

Delancy applauded the magnanimity of this heroic sentiment to the echo. A million pardons were begged—"he was very near-sighted"—a thousand apologies were offered, and all with so good a grace that Monkshaugh became certain the well-bred stranger, from ignorance of gems, had really been under a mistake.

"Whatever be this poor lady's infirmity," said Delancy, "I must conceive myself indebted to her, or to her brooch, for the happiness of making your acquaintance, Mr. Grahame. I would, however, rather owe to your kindness than her introduction a second favour—a sight of a picture of the Great and Gallant Marquis of Montrose, which I am told you possess, and which I should be sorry to quit Scotland without seeing."

Nothing could be demanded with better grace, nor more frankly granted.

"That is a sight no Grahame need be ashamed of, Mr. Delancy," replied Monkshaugh—pronouncing the GRAHAME very broadly as a lesson to the stranger. "Elizabeth, my dear, will you

accompany us to the drawing-room.”—And the Laird, in fresh remembrance of the year 1769, gallantly, and with an air, gave his arm to the lady, pointed his toe, raised his heel, and led the way, as if walking to St. Giles in the grand procession of the Lord High Commissioner to the Scotch Kirk in *chapeau-de-bras* step.

The drawing-room of Monkshaugh was rather a handsome apartment. It was one of the latest additions to the family mansion, and formed what was called a side-front—that is, it extended the whole depth of the original edifice, having three handsome windows in one range, and a very large bow-window in the end next the river. It was neither painted nor papered:—the dark, bright, and finely grained oak panelling, on which the Laird and his “ever-honoured mother” had exercised the female domestics for the last half-century, was richly carved; and the gilt cornices and mouldings, now mellowed from their first metallic glare, harmonized well with the rich warm hue of the polished walls. The oaken boards were so nicely fitted that the floor seemed one unbroken polished surface, over which every shadow was seen to quiver as it passed, and the rich Turkey carpet, rolled up by the marble hearth, like the Cash-

mere shawl thrown in hot weather over the arm of a fine lady, shewed that taste and not poverty was the cause of the uncovered floor.

The room would have looked cold and bare notwithstanding, but for the rich, full, old-fashioned, silk-damask window draperies of a bright golden, or aurora colour, which, richly fringed, hung in ample folds around the deep embrasures. The remaining furniture, without much pretension to elegance of form, shewed no lack of material, or of elaborate ornament. A few good pictures, and some rueful Grahames, Drummonds, and de Bruces, of both sexes, with three heavily gilt large mirrors, completed the furnishings of the apartment. Monkshaugh's modernized taste had, indeed, added some later decorations. Among these were minikin China cups and platters, and a large snub-nosed posset-dish with one ear, gilt card-racks and vilely daubed hand-skreens, gifts and keep-sakes of accomplished beauties now no more; and a grotto of shell-work, and filigree tea-caddie, the maiden achievements of the Laird's "ever-honoured mother;" which we leave to some future Walpole to describe. A spinet, a genuine old-fashioned spinet, a RUCCAR, was an article of more attraction—"sent from Holland to the Lady

Matgaret Grahame, by her husband Lord Monkshaugh, (the Lord of Session,) who built and fitted up this apartment," said Monkshaugh. But to Delancy the most remarkable ornaments about the room were the marble chimney-piece, a beautiful piece of Italian sculpture representing the bathing of Diana and her nymphs, and two magnificent walnut trees, called in the family "Gog and Magog," which threw their gigantic limbs over the casements, darkening the apartment to monastic gloom, save when the setting sun of a glowing evening threw in long slant beams, that danced and quivered in golden light and ebon shadow on the polished floor, forming then a beautiful tessellated pavement. These trees were part and parcel of the apartment. It would to the eye which had once seen them, have looked bare and desolate without their shade.

However Monkshaugh's young guest might have strained his conscience in admiration of the "fair Grace Drummond," the great grandmother of the Laird, called in her day the "Flower of Strathallan," or of the equally admired Miss Sibella Grahame, his full aunt, who had danced a Strathspey with Prince Charles at a ball given in Holyrood, there was the warmth of truth and feel-

ing in the sentiments which burst from him on viewing those splendid walnut trees, their strong-twisted knarled roots, a hillock—their boughs a temple.

“Trees of this growth, no matter what their kind,” said he, “are to a PLACE—I like that old Scottish word—what a long line of honourable ancestors are to a family, Mr. Grahame—something which neither the power of a monarch, nor the mines of either Ind can create.—How beautiful, Madam, are those pictures of domestic enjoyment, power, and stability, which represent the patriarchs of Scripture, ‘the world’s grey fathers,’ sitting each under ‘his own vine and fig-tree.’—These old patrician trees give a truer character of nobility to your mansion, Mr Grahame, than all the Grecian domes and columns, with fantastic mixture of the florid Gothic, which modern wealth has reared around you. Trees and gentlemen are of the few things which the philosopher’s stone cannot create, sir. Both require a generous soil and the nurture of centuries.”—And the young man looked as if proudly conscious of possessing what he described.

Monkshaugh, delighted with sentiments so congenial to his own, began to look with uncommon

complacence on the stranger. Insensibly his manners and language assumed a higher and more gentlemanlike tone. He thought of himself for the moment rather as Monkshaugh than as the rival of Mr. Hutchen ; and finally revolved whether or not it would be proper, *larder* and other reasons duly weighed, to invite this right-spirited young gentleman to stay dinner.

The curiosity of the young man was not nearly gratified, though he made very polite apologies—nor was his admiration half exhausted, when a scudding shower began to rattle on the leafy armour of Gog and Magog.

“ He might truly say,” he observed, “ that he had never been in a Scottish gentleman’s country mansion before.”—Elizabeth knew not what to make of the stranger. He appeared agreeable, intelligent, and perfectly well-bred, notwithstanding the diamond of Jacobina, with which his wit or impudence

“ Had cut its bright way through.”

Was his object mere amusement, or idleness, or curiosity? or —. Elizabeth’s modesty would allow no other surmise to rise in her mind, and she

dismissed the subject as unworthy of farther attention.

Monkshaugh had in the meantime revolved the state of the larder, the localities of which were never far from his mind's eye. By trenching on the turkey-poult destined to the weekly dinner given to the parish parson on Tuesdays, and on a dish of trout caught late on the previous evening, and already packed to be sent as a present to the Lady 'Tamtallan, the Laird's kinswoman and patroness, the "family dinner" would do no discredit on a day of *fast* to the owner of Gog and Magog. To the turkey-poult the parish minister had indeed forfeited all claim by his adoring bend to the pew of Harletillum ; and what Lady 'Tamtallan did not know could do her no harm.

The invitation was therefore cordially given, and the courtesy accepted with equal frankness. Apologies for undress followed ; and then, the sun shining out richly and warmly, a proposal was made to survey the garden, and in particular a huge, grotesque, old-fashioned sun-dial, sculptured in Flanders.

Some domestic avocation engaged Monkshaugh, and the young people proceeded together in airy

and unconstrained talk of flowers and trees, birds and scents, and the extreme natural beauty of this primitive garden. In passing a turfy bank, a knot of violets, the last of the year, attracted the notice of Elizabeth; but the wet grass prevented her from stepping from the gravel walk to gather them. Just then Monkshaugh came forward, and she returned to the house to dress. In a short time the gentlemen also returned through the sashed door which communicated with the usual sitting parlour of the family. Here stood Elizabeth's work-table in a window deeply sunk in the thick old wall. Here also hung some favourite pictures,

“The few best loved and most revered.”

“The picture of the young man on horseback which engages your attention, Mr. Delancy,” said Monkshaugh, “is intended for my nevoy, Captain Wolfe Grahame, of his Majesty's —— regiment of Light Horse. Our young cousin, Elizabeth, thinks the painter has not flattered. Whatever his looks may be, my nevoy has hitherto borne him as becomes his ancestors, and the heir of those poor bushes you were pleased to commend—and of yon old walls”—and he pointed through Elizabeth's window, from which there was

a vista peep of the *Pech's Path*, and of the mouldering walls of Ernescraig.

The young man hastily gathered up a few violets and a slip of pencilled paper, which he had previously scattered over the work-table.

"Captain Wolfe Grahame is heir of entail to the Lord de Bruce," said Monkshaugh, "of whose unhappy conditions you may have heard."

"I have indeed heard something of the melancholy story of that unfortunate nobleman," said Delancy. "An early blight, a mind too sensitive for its own peace. Goes it not so?"

"Too surely so," said Monkshaugh. "But here comes his daughter. Her father's malady is never alluded to in her presence."

It was not however the young lady; and, this ascertained, Delancy ventured to inquire where and under whose care the unhappy gentleman lived.

"That ye may best learn from his custodier, Mr. John Hutchen," said Monkshaugh. "That person, sir, actuated by what motives I do not say, got countenance from another relation more remote in the entail, to oppose my obtaining charge of our unhappy kinsman, on the ground of being interested in his days proving brief; as if I or Captain

Wolfe Grahame were such miscreants as to injure a single hair of the head of one so near and dear to us—one whom it has pleased God to afflict so grievously. Yes ! Mr. Delancy, I have deep cause of feud with your host at that place yonder.”—He disdained to name the Whim.—“ For ten years that young gentlewoman whom you have seen, the Honourable Elizabeth de Bruce, lived in Ernes-craig more neglected than ever was an honest farmer’s child, by this trustee of the de Bruce—left with scarcely the means of nurture, and none of education—only permitted by stealth to visit *me*, her nearest kinsman, till she gained spirit to shake off his trammels and know her friends—friendless enough still, poor lassie !”

Delancy again slipped down his pencilled paper and the violets on Elizabeth’s work-table. The Whittret now entered ; and by certain conventional signals, long established and well understood in the family, beckoned forth the Laird for a general survey.

The skill of Effie, and the laudable vanity and tact of the faithful Frisel, had done wonders on board and beaufet. The old family plate shone forth in lustrous splendour. Rich damask table

linen of German manufacture, representing a wild-boar chase, with napkins to correspond, and massive gilt china, called, in household phrase, “The Red Set,” were not forgotten. But the suffrage of the Laird must be obtained for the whole set out ; and for this he was now summoned forth.

“Here comes my knave, Francis Frisel, or Fraser, as our cousins in the north have it. If there be any thing farther that interests your curiosity in this poor house he is well qualified, Mr. Delancy, to be your Cicerone, while, with your permission, I wash my hands.

“That is the Laird’s knave proper,” said Frisel, with his own peculiar look of shrewd humour, and a familiarity which, however, knew how to keep bounds. “Neither your English rascal nor your Irish rogue ; but, if it please you, in the sense of St. Paul, in Mr. Gideon’s auld English bible, who calls himself ‘the knave,’ and so forth.”

“Knave proper—knave parcel rogue.—I shall not forget the distinction,” said Delancy. “And now, Mr. Knave Proper, pray tell me, if you can, by whom that piece over the door was painted.” And Delancy pointed to a spirited and highly finished picture, representing a dance of witches,

scared at the wildest height of their revelry by a bright black eye from behind the arras falling upon their orgies.

“There’s no a bairn i’ the four hill-side parochines but could tell you the story of that picture,” said Frisel: “Muckle Meg o’ Monkshaugh. It was painted in Flanders, by orders of that auld Monkshaugh who was Lord of Session, anent a passage in his early travels in Italy. Saw ye never such another pair of bristly lucken-brows as darken like auld abbey-pends over the bold black een of that stalwart dame, who is stretching out her arm yonder, like a truncheon o’ command, pointing to the eye which has fallen upon their witch cantraps and wallopping?”

“I could almost say, allowing for difference of dress and sex, that in their strongly marked expression, the features of that arch-witch—the principal figure in the group, I mean—resemble those of a gentleman whom I have seen in this neighbourhood.”

“Cod, ye’re a witch for a guesser,” cried Frisel, surprised out of the respectful observance with which, by eye and speech, he intended to devote himself to his master’s guest—a demeanour which sat but indifferently on him at any time.—“Ye’re

a witch for a guesser. And good right of resemblance ; for that runnion was the founder, of the haughty house o' Harletillum, for as high as it carries its head the day."

"And thereby hangs a tale," said Delancy, "which I see by his saucy eyes, Master Knave Proper burns to tell me.—Out with it, man !"

"Since ye sae command," replied the Whittret demurely, "Ye must know, sir, that one of the auld Monkshaughs, the Lord o' Session—it might be the present Laird's gude-sire—was on his travels in foreign parts, when late on a night, and after a lang day of hard riding in the dark fir forests, he came upon a house of entertainment for man and horse, in Italy, or High Germanie, or some far awa' part where the gospel is little kenned and less cared for. Weel, as the tale goes—and I have heard auld John Yule, the son of the then Laird's body servant, tell it a thousand times—there was no admittance for him ; the house being bespoke by a strange gentleman all in black—(Ye'll remark, sir, that's aye the livery of lawyers, de'ils, and doctors)—for a lordly company who were to banquet and carouse there on that same night. Seeing him sore bested and forspent wi' travel, the landlady couldna find it in her heart to turn

the comely young gentleman frae her door; so under promise o' lying quiet, and keeping his een shut whatever he might see through them, or hear, or jalouse, he was bedded in that high chalmer behind the arras, which opened off the gallery overlooking the banqueting ha' there i' the picture; but he first supped upon a roast capon and some hind-legs o' puddocks—which auld John Yule told me are an eatable delicate in Papist countries, being o' the nature o' fish—with a flagon o' good Rhenish, whilk, to my mind, was the better part o' the entertainment.—Weel, with loaded pistols and drawn sword, and the open Bible by his bedside, the young Laird, as I said, being forspent with travel, fell into a sound sleep; dreaming, it might be, o' his father's house, and the bonnie holms o' Monkshaugh—as wha would na that had ever played a bairn about them—and frae less to mair, till all at once he was wakened in amaze by loud dancing and deray, clappings o' hands and skirlings o' mirth; and to his astonishment the auld Scotch lilt o' 'The Back o' the Change-house,' played up loud and strong on the bagpipe; whilk ye'll observe, sir, has aye been the favourite instrument at a' witch bridals, splores, and derri-downs.

“As auld John Yule said—and he was four times married—the women folk cannot thole to see others in greater request and favour than themselves e’en wi’ the very de’il himsel’, who on that night was thought to take special notice o’ our friend there.” Frisel nodded to the principal figure in the picture.—‘It’s a shame,’ cried Bessie Weir, ‘to see Muckle Meg footing it away that gate, and her auld gudeman no cauld in his coffin yet in the kirk-yard o’ San Serf.’

“‘Blaw on him and cool him, Bessie,’ quoth Meg. ‘But the dead to the dead, and the living to the living;—play ye up hearty, auld Plotcock!’ and wi’ that the jig began, and young Monks-haugh, still between sleeping and waking, spendid out o’ his bed, and rushed sword in hand into the thrang o’ them.

“‘Then rose the screeching and yellochin, the flashing o’ blue lowes, and the reek and smell o’ brimstone, and the confabulation as to whether he should be boiled, roasted, or brandered alive.

“‘Eh!’ cried Muckle Meg, ‘An’ is this my winsome young Laird o’ Monkshaugh.—Sisters, mine ye’se no singe ae hair o’ his bonnie black beard.’—And she flew to her hemlock naig—cried to the Laird to loup on behint—and aff and awa’

owre sea and land like a scannachin' o' moonlight.

“Next morning the young Laird was seen i' the grey dawn daundering through the cotter-town o' Harletillum, then *our* property; and in the whilk Meg, to her dying day, held a cow's-grass mail-free for that night's wark.—Monkshaugh, as I said, grew a douce man after that, and a great lawyer, cautious of his tongue. He never could bide to be questioned by mortal man, carnal or divine, as to what he had seen; though it was jaloused ae dozen o' tar barrels would not have quenched that convocation o' our Scotch worthies. There was Kate Cairnie, the slee-looking quean in the corner there laughing, wi' her finger pointing out—‘Cuttie Kate,’ as she was called—wha thirty years thereafter suffered on the witch-knowe of Rookstown; and Meggy Mushat, wha lunted on the lang-sands o' Kirkaldy—a Dysart skipper, whose bairn she had bewitched, smelt the burning tar in Norrawa' that same day—and mony mair in presence that night.—Ye may ken Meggy there by her pistol-fit.”

“And how does your neighbour, Mr Hutchen, relish this piece?” inquired Delancy.

“Aye—ye maun take wiser counsel than mine

on that point," replied Frisel.—"It has 'been thought by great divines, that had Laird John rode foremost that night, things would have kythed in a different guise for the twa families. But ill fortune has dogged the heels of ilka Monkshaugh frae that day to this; and is like to worry us outright now. I once heard Godly Gideon say—and though a simple man he's a deep divine—that it had been better the auld Monkshaugh had withstood the Enemy, and dared the warst, rather than have trinketed and melled wi' witch women for rescue of life or limb."

"I have small skill in such subtle points of casuistry," replied Delancy.

"He has though," interrupted Frisel.—"No the first time Godly Gideon has come to handigrips, in a cited meeting wi' the de'il, i' the howe hour o' midnight, in the dean o' Monkshaugh."

"Then I promise you the devil had the worst," said Delancy.

"That he had, or I wadna ha'e been talking to you here, sir," whispered the Whittret earnestly.

"Tush, man!" rejoined Delancy.—"You don't mean to tell me that the devil was for carrying off

beforehand a prey that, with a little patience, he is so sure of."

" 'This is nae sport,' said Frisel, gravely.—
" 'But have you ever heard our family prophecy—

‘ When the Hurcheon † lairs in the Erne’s ‡ nest,
‘ Monkshaugh maun stoop its leafy crest.’

" 'Whilk auld John Yule lived to see expounded, when the Laird was obligated to cut his oak hag to pay off the interest of the bonds held by John Hurcheon, as trustee for Ernescraig. Before then it was thought to point at a marriage between Captain Wolfe and Miss Juliana.—Ay, it was a black day yon for the house o’ Monkshaugh, when Laird John rode on the crupper o’ Meg Hurcheon’s hemlock naig.’"

" 'But I doubt whether all those family legends and historical pictures are likely to propitiate Mr. Grahame’s creditor,' said Delancy,—“and, my excellent and most zealous knave proper, you know that there is such a virtue in a servant as prudence as well as attachment.”

" 'De’il care, sir!’ replied the Whittret. “Are we to turn our family ornaments and pictures to the wall for his gude liking? Let his family

† Hurcheon—a hedge-hog.

‡ Erne—an eagle.

progress c'en hang there,—begun in witchery, thriven by cheaterie, and ending in devilry. Well, there's a heaven aboon a'!"

The Whittret, with this pious reflection, made his bow and walked out.

"Truly a free-spoken family, master and knave," thought Delancy; "and a very pretty sort of ras-cal this mine host of the Whim, if their accounts may pass audit. Thank heaven we have got beyond the days of old prejudice, when a man was judged by his company. I trust their Laddy 'Lizbeth is as far advanced as the age. I must try however. Something extremely piquante, in the air of indifference with which this secluded beauty listens to compliments rather better fancied, I humbly conceive, than those she has been accustomed to receive from her grotesque father confessor, or this hospitable ancient Adonis. To be sure there is this swash-buckler—this Captain Wolfe—hard that an honest fellow in a blue or a black coat cannot advance a step, nowadays, without danger to his heels from those youths of the sabre and hussar-cap, turn which way he will. But I must watch my bait, though I dare say I am come here as usual on a wildgoosechase."—And he again conspicuously arranged the violets.

When Monkshaugh had finished his own elaborate toilette, he tapped at Elizabeth's door, to propound to her his opinion as to what ornaments might best befit her on this day. Elizabeth was too genuine a woman in all her tastes to require much urging on the point of personal decoration. She would neither have painted the rose nor added perfume to the violet—but she loved to see the one display the lovely hues and form, and the other shed the sweet fragrance with which nature has enriched them to the light of day, and to human sense.

She laughingly promised obedience to the well-intended hints, but made her prompt appearance with no other ornament—if ornament it might be called—than a favourite tortoise-shell comb, the gift of Wolfe Grahame, confining those rich braids of beautiful hair, which might have been arranged by the Graces or some young painter in their suite, but which bore no marks of the fingers of the expert friseur.

“That is quite the taste of Elizabeth de Bruce,” said Monkshaugh, glancing spitefully at tresses hastily twisted, and ringlets over-long to be “tidy” or peruke-like, and continuing a conversation on

modern dress into which he had entered with Delancy.

“ Robes loosely flowing, hair as free,
Such sweet neglect more pleaseth me,” —

said Delancy, with exactly that degree of affectation necessary to take off the air quotative by exaggerating its absurd pedantry. And he looked with respectful admiration on the figure full of life, grace, and loveliness, which he now first beheld free from the mufflings of morning costume.

“ And see what is the upshot of such freedom, Mr. Delancy,” said Monkshaugh. “ I defy any plain gentleman to tell mistress from waiting-maid in these days of cheap tambours and spinning-jennies, except that the hair of the lass may be something better in buckle.” Another spiteful glance at Elizabeth’s carelessly dressed head—and a self-approving, stealthy look in the opposite mirror, which reflected the crisp cauliflower wig, newly powdered, fresh in “ buckle,” and handled in putting on as if made of butterflies’ wings, that marked his narrow but smooth forehead by a boundary line of hair-powder, like the divisions of parishes on a county map.

“ You must at least allow modern dress the su-

periority of greater ease and cleanliness," said Delancy.—“ Unless a lady of the last age had her attendant sylphs think on the misery in which she must have taken her meals,

“ Trembling and conscious of the rich brocade.”

As to the other affair, I avow I have often been in pain about those rich tissues and velvets handed down from generation to generation, unanointed, unmancaled of soap or water.”

“ Ladies had cedar-wood chips, musk, and sweet bags to perfume and sweeten their robes,” said Monkshaugh.

“ No perfume like a lump of soap, the crystal spring, and the sweet air,” replied Delancy. “ We hear a great deal of the stateliness and delicacy of manners of our grandmothers, who breakfasted on beef-steaks and fat ale—spoke their honest minds—dealt their lovers a box on the ear—and were, at the same time, arrayed all for defence or defiance. A fine lady’s dress resembled a regular fortification in those days :—battlements and circumvallations of hoop—draw-bridge of stomacher—chevaux-de-frise of whale-bone and hair-pins—banner and pennon of lappet and top-knot. Vauban could not better have built them ; and yet, Mr. Grahame, these were the times ere every Joan was a

lady !—No mistaking the dairy-wench for the dutchess—the castle of the baron for the upstart mushroom villa of the tradesman.”

Elizabeth smiled at the address which she could neither practise nor condemn.

“ I am proud to hear a gay young gentleman so speak under my roof,” said Monkshaugh.—“ Would that this heaven would work, Mr. Delancy ; for, to the croppit heads of the men, and the dockit tails of the women, I, now in my grand climacteric, trace mair of the evils and troubles of these unquiet and licentious times, than it would be seemly to mention in this presence. My ever honoured mother, the umquhile ledly of Monkshaugh, whom the eye of man—not even mine, Mr. Delancy—never fell on but in complete dress, whether dishabile or full, bestowed three stricken hours every day on her toilette. It was, no doubt, sore upon her in her latter years ; but her high spirit never shrunk from what she owed to her name and station.

“ ‘ I am worn out, Robie,’ was her speech to me the very day before her decease, as she sat on that settee in full dress, her yellow negligee wi’ the bugle stomacher and robings spread over her haunch hoop, triple ruffle cuffs, full frizzled and

powdered toupee, wi' side buckles, laced head, embroidered high-heeled slippers, silver-fringed gloves, diamond clasp and ivory fan ; wi' her work-bag, hussey-case and gold-rimmed spectacles beside her—for idleness was what she could not thole—‘ I am worn out, Robie,’ she said, ‘ but it will soon be over ; and, while I tarry in the body, no one shall mistake the household maidens for the leddy of Monkshaugh and Kippencreevy Wester.’ ”

“ A noble lady ! ” exclaimed Delaney ; and added, in a lower tone for Elizabeth’s ear, “ according to her fantastic notions.”

“ If my mistress-ship cannot be sustained and bodied forth,” said Elizabeth, smiling, “ except by the grandeur of a hoop, or the stateliness of whalebones and laces—alas ! for my dignity. Luckily for me, bolder spirits had effected the radical change ere my day, or I would myself have been a partisan, Monkshaugh.”

“ Fie ! ‘ Lizbeth,” exclaimed the Laird. “ You to talk thus—a gentlewoman born ! I had it from a gentleman who was told by the gentleman-usher of her gracious Majesty, that this revolution in garments was all begun by a French play-actress, Mr. Delaney, who doffed her hoop along with her

reputation—assumed the habit of a Greek slave-woman, in some French play, and was copied by a light-headed English lady of fashion, who set this wildfire example at home ; and now, neither hoop nor queue, nor flapped vest, nor laced stomacher, nor good-breeding, nor maidenly propriety or discretion, nor distinction o' rank, are to be met with in three parishes, as some o' us may have seen this same morning."

"For part of this the Graces be praised," said Elizabeth, again smiling. "But do not say that modern taste disdains ornament. 'This little flower ; and she unconsciously took up one of Delancy's violets and wreathed it carelessly into her hair—looked down again—saw the pencilled paper ; and, with a cheek of crimson, read—

In aspect meek, in dwelling low,
I hide me on the grassy lea ;
But twine me round thy modest brow,
Lady, the proudest flower I'll be.

With scarce a pause, Elizabeth took the violet out of her tresses, saying—"Even this little flower were precious ornament, did affection gather it—did the hand of love entwine it. When my cousin, Wolfe, was at home I often wore flowers.—Don't say that modern taste disdains ornament, Monks-haugh."

“Now this, for a young lady, is what I call plain speaking,” thought Delaney. “What the devil does this proud beauty think I care for herself or her cousin Wolfe !” And he said aloud, in tones savouring of bitterness, but gaily smiling—“So you cruelly resolve, like Mephibosheth, neither to trim your hair nor shave your beard till this happy cousin Wolfe return in triumph from my poor native Ireland.”

“Mr. Delaney,” said the Laird, gravely, “you forget that ladies have no beards.”

“Most true,” replied Delaney, “that is one natural superiority they possess along with every other over us of the rougher kind.”

“But then there is the dressing of this hair which begets us such plague,” said Elizabeth, smiling, and willing to do away the effect of the over earnestness or prudery with which she had received what might be but a piece of unmeaning, forward gallantry—painful to her only from the consciousness of a peculiar situation.

“Hush !” said Delaney, whose pride was now engaged to second her purpose of treating what had passed as idle sport. “You know modern hair-dressing is to a lady positive enjoyment. What I call the ‘Curling Hour,’ is, I think, the

happiest of a true woman's day.—I appeal to your honest feelings, Madam ?”

Elizabeth glowingly remembered the time when it had indeed been so to her. The hour so longed for, which gave her to silence and solitude in the very heart and sanctuary of home, the fire-side of her own chamber—and brought Grahame to her side in the sweet and fresh confidence of their early union, there “to talk the flowing heart,” while hours were melted down to minutes.

“The *curling hour*,” continued Delancy, “supposes all the toils, and vanities, and excitements, and displays of the lady's day fairly at an end: its duties also if you will. It is the hour ‘maids love, when they laugh alone.’ You know, Monks-haugh, that the immense quantity of matter which ladies have at all times to communicate to each other, has long been the marvel and envy of the whole male creation. Now, this is the brightest hour of the twenty-four in which”—and he hummed—

“To hear the pretty ladies talk,
“Tittle-tattle—prittle-prattle,
“Like their pattens, when they walk,
“Piddle-paddle—piddle-paddle.”

“It is equally delightful to the solitary fair. A man can but have his boots pulled off and tumble into

bed:—though a certain Captain Clutterbuck whom I know, is, I own, a luxurious fellow. Well, in the warmth and security of her comfortable chamber, slowly does the solitary fair one disencumber herself of her richer habits and ornaments, assume the flowing white drapery of her dressing-gown, and charged with no ungentler toil than braiding her wanton ringlets, gives herself up to fond imaginings and gentle recollections; or refreshes her soul in delicious leisure, or indulges in mere indolent vacuity of thought.

“ ‘The curling hour’ admits of reading, if not of profound *bas-bleu* study. Fashionable novellists and poets owe half their immortality to it. The lady may then linger over her lover’s picture, or last letter from my own green Ireland, or elsewhere,” (‘No lack of impertinence with this easy Mr. Delancy,’ thought Elizabeth,) “and the fond perusal no whit interfere with the graceful secondary employment of twisting and untwisting her slender ivory fingers in the tendrils of her hair, through which they wanton and wander as it were by instinct. Then come thronging soft wishes, and softer remembrances. May I still be remembered by my mistress when at evening she unlaces her boddice, and unbinds her hair!—Let

her give her morning hours to what coxcombs' and vanities she pleases."

Elizabeth who had sunk into reverie, started like a sleepy listener when the voice of the reader suddenly stops, the catch word only ringing on his dull ear; and smiling at her own confusion, said,—“ And forgotten, I suppose, by your friend when he at morning lathers his chin! Pray now give us the other hour in contrast.”—Delancy shrugged his shoulders in Frenchman's fashion, and smilingly went on. “ *The shaving hour* :—to be lugged head and shoulders out of bed by some scoundrel valet, who never will learn in a cold morning, how properly to interpret orders given over night about being called.—Morning raw, sulky, and chill—fire bad, smoking—or none!—razors blunt and jagged—and the execrable *snout-scraping* process rising in all its horrors in full prospect before you. Water rung for three times : and presented in the state of the Church of Laodicea—teeth clenched—lips compressed—chin lathered and re-lathered—blue and yellow skin in cadaverous contrast with snowy suds!—And then, Mr. Grahame, the deliberate sit-down to make all manner of grotesque and ugly faces at oneself. In other misfortunes our enemies mock

at us—in this, by a refinement of punishment, the Christian gentleman must either ‘submit to be taken by the nose by a beastly tonsor,’ (that means barber, ‘Lizbeth, said the Laird graciously whispering aside,) or compelled to grin and flout in his own face, like an angry ape as he is. I would I were an ‘Ebrew Jew else.

“But I speak to one who never had a beard.” And he bowed to Elizabeth with a sigh and a look of pathos—the violets, Wolfe Grahame, and Mephibosheth apparently all alike forgotten.

“In my time,” thought Monkshaugh, looking grave, “speaking of rough beards before gentle ladies would not have passed. This too I suppose is the revolution style.”

The Whittret entered—to announce dinner—Elizabeth hoped, as the cracked bell had sounded its final bray some minutes before. His business was of different import. “Mrs. and Mr. Hutchen’s compliments, and the carriage was on the way to meet Mr. Delaney, as they understood the rain had prevented his return.”

Monkshaugh had often admired—as who has not—the ease and grace with which some gifted persons can do a thing of very suspicious civility, and yet make it pass as an act of unquestionable

politeness, if not a positive kindness conferred. He did this now—as Delancy sent back his reply to this message; and only doubted whether the fault—if fault there were—did not lie with himself, who had, it might appear, crimped the guest of his neighbour Harletillum.

The hour of dinner and the evening passed pleasantly away. The young gentleman talked of Ireland, his native country, with intelligence and spirit, and with that becoming degree of partiality due by every man to his country, and to his own feelings when absent from it. Elizabeth listened with pleasure, put many questions, and gathered much matter for farther musings.

The qualities of the wine, a genial though rather hackneyed topic, were also taken up, but tolerably soon discussed. Monkshaugh's wine, stored by his father and grandfather, was old and choice; and both the gentlemen had been bred where wine was purchased in larger quantities than dozens, and in greater variety than Port and Sherry—a circumstance which the sagacious reader may have remarked as peculiarly disqualifying to the growth and refinement of ultra taste in your vinous critic, who generally brings an unsophisticated palate to his delicate task. Mr. Hutchen was lately become

most recondite, Monkshaugh understood, in his judgment and selection of wines; so that some of his aristocratic friends, who had at least as much vanity as dignity, though they contrived to swallow his liquor, were at times ready to choke on the boast of its qualities and rarity.

The cellars of Monkshaugh naturally led to those of Harletillum; and in general to the affairs of that family.—“His lady is a Bruce by her mother, I understand,” said Delancy.

“Brewis—Brewis!” cried the Laird in wrath. “So all her forebears wrote it.—*Bruce*, indeed! but your English lugs—that is Irish ears, Mr. Delancy, cannot discriminate the difference of the sounds. Elizabeth, my dear, pronounce the word plainly to the gentleman.—*Brewis*, or Brose, signifying pot-liquor, or a coarse composition of oatmeal and hot water, the food o’ the lower class: but I’ll convince you by a receipt which I keep under her grandfather, auld Gibby Brewis’s own hand, for monies received for top-piecing a pair of leather-and-prunella slippers to my ever-honoured mother.—‘Lizbeth, stay ye w’ the gentleman.’—And off went the Laird in prodigious haste, leaving Elizabeth a little discomfited by his absurdity.

“The violet then is not a favourite flower with

the ladies of Ernscraig," said Delancy very modestly, after a short pause of silence, lifting his own rejected offering, and throwing into the fire the stanza which had accompanied the flowers.—
"They prize more the buds which blossom earlier, and may sooner wither."

Elizabeth was spared the pain of making any reply to this ambiguous address by a tremendous crash overhead, where Monkshaugh was rummaging in a lumber closet for the important document which was to crush forever the family pretensions of Mrs. Hutchen. Certain of finding him in some ludicrous plight, Elizabeth wished Delancy to remain where he was ; but he had followed her.—Half-smothered in a cloud of cobwebs, old papers, and tattered pamphlets, they found "The Grahame" sprawling beside the steps, which had overturned as he was descending after having successfully scaled the top-most shelf in search of the paper, which he now held clenched in his hand, like a dying ensign still grasping his colours fast.

"We'll need a touch of the Riga here," whispered Frisel.

"My dear sir, are you much hurt?" cried Elizabeth really alarmed.

"A twist i' the hip joint, and a little peeled i'

the shins, 'Lizbeth," replied the Laird heroically, giving himself a hitch.—“ But see, 'Lizbeth—see, Mr. Delancy!—*B-r-e-w-i-s*, as plain as a pike-staff.—Is my wig awry, Francie?—A pretty stourie chalmer of dais Mistress Fechnie keeps here!—*Bruce*, indeed!”

The family honours of Harletillum thus demolished on all hands, Elizabeth hoped that Monks-haugh might now repose under his laurels for a few weeks. This expectation was vain, although it was frustrated by no new overt act of the Laird. But for the clearer comprehension of our history, it is now necessary that the reader be more particularly introduced to the WHIM FAMILY.

